United Nations S/PV.7020

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7020th meeting
Tuesday, 20 August 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Perceval	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Kim Sook
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. M'Beou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

13-43233 (E)

Accessible document

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Fernandez-Taranco.

Mr. Fernandez-Taranco: The Council meets again amid continued regional unrest, with a volatile situation in Egypt, a fragile Lebanon and ongoing turmoil in Syria. The Secretary-General has issued two statements in recent days regarding the situation in Egypt, and the Deputy Secretary-General briefed Council members last Thursday. The developments in Egypt and their regional implications continue to be of great concern and merit our close attention. In the period under review, we also witnessed a small but important opening for peace with the launch, last month, of resumed direct talks between Israelis and Palestinians. It has long been the belief of the United Nations that progress on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could have a positive impact on regional stability. That has become all the more critical in recent weeks against the backdrop of such troubling developments elsewhere in the region.

Efforts led by the United States Secretary of State over a four-month period culminated in a series of preparatory meetings between the negotiators in Washington, D.C., on 29 and 30 July, where parties agreed on an agenda that would cover all core final status issues and to working towards a comprehensive agreement within nine months. Those meetings were followed by a first formal round of talks in Jerusalem on 14 August, after the release of 26 pre-Oslo prisoners from Gaza and the West Bank, based on an Israeli Cabinet decision of 29 July. A second round took place between negotiators today in Jericho. In its statement of 30 July, the Quartet welcomed the resumption of talks and reiterated its members' shared commitment to helping the parties achieve a negotiated two-State solution within the agreed time frame. Quartet envoys intend to meet soon to discuss next steps.

It is against that background that the Secretary-General travelled to the region — to Jordan, Palestine and Israel — on 15 and 16 August to lend his personal support to the leaders on both sides. He has been encouraged by the seriousness of the efforts to bring the parties to the negotiating table after a prolonged political stalemate, and he has praised the determination of United States Secretary of State Kerry in that regard. He also welcomed the appointment of United States special envoy for Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations, Mr. Martin Indyk. He was particularly heartened by the bold decision of President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu to embark on direct dialogue, which remains the single most credible path to a solution. The Secretary-General found both Palestinian and Israeli leaderships recommitted to the vision of a two-State solution, which is clearly in the best interest of both peoples. His own message was that this is an opportunity neither could afford to miss. It is his firm belief that direct negotiations are the only way through which Palestinians can realize their rightful aspirations for an independent and viable Palestinian State. and Israelis can meet their legitimate security needs and finally become a crucial partner in the development of a stable and prosperous Middle East.

The Secretary-General continues to believe that a two-State solution can be achieved through negotiations that resolve permanent status issues such as borders, security, refugees and Jerusalem. For those negotiations to have a chance at success, they need to be meaningful, with a clear political horizon, and yield early dividends in the immediate period ahead.

The Secretary-General recognizes that the road ahead is fraught with obstacles. He has nevertheless appealed to political leaders on both sides, as well as to Palestinian and Israeli youth, to overcome their deep scepticism and embolden their leaders in efforts to shape the better future their peoples deserve. It is incumbent opon regional and international stakeholders to help the parties carry those efforts forward. Both sides now need to sustain an environment conducive to the peace process moving forward. The parties must refrain from actions that would risk undermining prospects during the negotiations, and there have to be visible improvements in the situation on the ground.

The reporting period witnessed a decrease in search and arrest operations conducted by Israeli security forces; 229 such operations in the West Bank resulted in 276 Palestinians arrested. A total of 88 Palestinian civilians were injured by Israeli forces, including 20 children and 5 women. Two Israeli soldiers were injured by Palestinians. However, in a worrisome development, on 19 August, 39 Palestinians, including 18 children, were forcibly evicted and their homes were destroyed in what appears to be a significant increase in demolitions in East Jerusalem during the reporting period. At least six other structures were also demolished today in Area C.

As reported last month, the Israeli authorities implemented a number of measures aimed at easing access for Palestinians from the rest of the West Bank to East Jerusalem during the holy month of Ramadan. Israeli authorities also partially opened the historic access road into Hebron city from the south to Palestinian traffic, which had been closed for the last 12 years, citing security concerns for nearby settlers. Though limited, such measures represent important steps forward at this crucial moment in the political process. The Secretary-General was encouraged by indications from the Israeli authorities of additional measures in the planning to further ease restrictions on Palestinian movement and access, whether of people or goods.

At the same time, the Secretary-General remained deeply troubled by Israel's continuing settlement activity in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, referencing recent announcements of the approval of some 2,000 housing units. The position of the United Nations on settlements being against international law remains firm. Furthermore, settlement activity deepens mistrust, undermines efforts to advance peace and will ultimately render a two-State solution impossible.

Continued settler violence is also disconcerting. On 25 July, Israeli settlers set fire to about 100 Palestinian-owned olive trees in the village of Mikhmas, near Ramallah. Such violent attacks undermine the livelihoods of communities across the West Bank. I urge the Israeli authorities to ensure that all measures are taken ahead of the olive harvest later next month to protect Palestinians and their property and enable Palestinian access to their land to maintain their crops year-round.

The Secretary-General has welcomed the Israeli Cabinet's decision on the release of pre-Oslo prisoners. He nevertheless remains concerned about the fate of some 5,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, especially those on hunger strike — of which there are currently 10, after 4 Jordanians ended their strike — and those in administrative detention, who should be either tried or released.

In Ramallah, the Secretary-General met with the newly reappointed Palestinian Prime Minister, Rami Hamdallah, who was asked by President Abbas on 15 August to form a new Government within five weeks. He reiterated the United Nations commitment to ensuring the development of Palestinian communities in the West Bank and Gaza deserving of economic growth and recovery, with access to land, sea and resources. He further supported efforts to shore up the Palestinian economy and safeguard the important State-building achievements, issues that will be addressed in next month's meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for the Coordination of the International Assistance to Palestinians.

On the occasion of his visit, the Palestinian Authority and the United Nations signed the first-ever United Nations development assistance framework for the State of Palestine. Describing the collective United Nations response to national development priorities, the framework places the Palestinian people at the centre of development programming and empowers people to exercise human rights, enjoy access to basic services and achieve their right to an adequate standard of living.

The calm in Gaza has been tentative, with six projectiles shot at Israel, acts that we strongly condemn. Two Israeli incursions and one air strike were recorded during the reporting period. One Palestinian was killed while attempting to infiltrate Israel through the fence in the north-east of Al-Bureij refugee camp on 10 August, and six others were injured in similar situations, including three at sea. Three Palestinians were arrested on 17 August while attempting to swim towards Israel west of Beit Lahia. We call on Israel to show maximum restraint in such situations and make every effort to protect Palestinian civilians.

Gaza remains a high priority for the United Nations and must not be forgotten in the context of a resumed peace process. Despite early negative reactions, we express the hope that the Hamas de facto authorities

will not hamper efforts to achieve the two-State solution, which is the only opportunity for achieving lasting peace and ending the isolation of the Gaza Strip.

As a result of political developments in Egypt, access through Rafah has been restricted for security reasons. Combined with the long-standing restrictions on the free movement of people and goods via Israel, such measures have continued to have an adverse impact on the civilian population, including by limiting access to health care for some of the most vulnerable patients in Gaza and resulting in shortages in key medical supplies. The continued robust measures undertaken by the Egyptian authorities against illegal activity through tunnels into Gaza have also affected the availability of key commodities, in particular construction materials.

Access through legal crossings has therefore become all the more critical. The Secretary-General has seriously engaged relevant partners, including the Israeli authorities, at the request of the Palestinian Government, on further increasing access through legal crossings and in particular on liberalizing access of construction materials into Gaza. We are hopeful that positive steps in that regard will be taken soon. Such steps would further solidify the November ceasefire understanding, which calls for the lifting of closures and addressing of Israel's security concerns.

In the latest incident in the Sinai peninsula, yesterday we witnessed alarming news of an ambush on two minibuses, which killed 25 Egyptian police officers. The Secretary-General condemned the ambush, and the United Nations hopes that the perpetrators will be swiftly identified and brought to justice.

In a separate yet troubling development, three missiles were shot on the night of 12 August at the resort city of Eilat. Two missiles were intercepted by the Iron Dome system and no damage was reported. A terror group named Ansar Bayt Al-Maqdis claimed responsibility for the attack. Such shootings are unacceptable and condemned in the strongest terms.

Let me turn to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, where bloodshed continues unabated. The Government forces continue to use indiscriminate shelling and air strikes against densely populated civilian areas, with absolute disregard for the protection of civilians. For their part, armed opposition groups also continue to fail in their obligation to protect civilians, and many continue to engage in military operations within populated areas. Both warring sides also continue to commit acts of torture, abduction and kidnapping, at times along sectarian lines.

It is critical that both sides be reminded of their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. It is important that all efforts be made to ensure that those committing international crimes, regardless of their rank, position or affiliation, will be held accountable.

Reports of military confrontations and displacement throughout the country along sectarian lines threaten to further unravel the social fabric of Syrian society. We are very concerned about incidents of kidnappings of clerics and of civilians in general. The continued influx of foreign fighters exacerbates sectarian and ethnic tensions and must be brought to an end.

Meanwhile, in the absence of a long-called-for political solution, humanitarian needs are growing by the minute, outpacing our efforts to respond. Well above 6.8 million Syrians now depend on humanitarian assistance. More than 4 million Syrians are estimated to be displaced inside their own country, and nearly 2 million Syrians are now registered and/or assisted as refugees in Syria's neighbouring countries. Over the past few days, the world has watched with grave concern the exodus of over 20,000 people from north-eastern Syria into Iraq.

Access to those in need continues to be a challenge. The United Nations and our humanitarian partners count on the Security Council to assist in facilitating access to all those in need inside Syria and neighbouring countries.

The position of the Secretary-General remains unchanged: there is no military solution to the conflict. The legitimate demands of the Syrian people for freedom and dignity will not be silenced by arms. Recent military victories by Government forces should not give the Government false confidence that it can win militarily. Likewise, promises of arms should not push the opposition towards different priorities or expectations other than a political solution. What is urgently needed is a political solution. In that regard, we continue to do our best to endeavour that the Geneva Conference takes place as soon as possible. Technical preparations are almost complete. We hope that the entire international community will remain committed to the process and contribute to its success, in word and in action.

The Secretary-General remains gravely concerned at the reports of alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria. The United Nations mission to investigate allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, led by Mr. Åke Sellström, arrived in Damascus on Sunday, 18 August and began its work yesterday. As agreed with the Government, the team will conduct its activities in the country for a period of up to 14 days, extendable by mutual consent. The mission will contemporaneously investigate the alleged use of chemical weapons reported by the Government of Syria in Khan Al-Asal and two other allegations of the use of chemical weapons reported by Member States. The names of those two sites have been conveyed to the Syrian authorities following their acceptance of the modalities of the conduct of the mission. In parallel, the two parties will discuss other allegations and their related sites.

On the Golan, the situation remains volatile, with intense shelling and heavy clashes between the Syrian armed forces and armed members of the opposition occurring inside the area of separation. From 17 August, clashes intensified in the area of separation, in particular, near United Nations positions 68 and 69, which forced peacekeepers at those positions to take shelter. No injuries to United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) personnel were reported, although indirect fire caused damage to those United Nations positions. On the same day, Israel Defense Forces (IDF) fired at least two guided missiles from the Alpha side across the ceasefire line, in response to earlier fire from the Bravo side that crossed the ceasefire line. UNDOF observed the continued presence of roadblocks with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in the vicinity of two United Nations positions and a United Nations observation post, which affects the freedom of movement of UNDOF personnel. Incidents of threatening behaviour against UNDOF personnel from armed members of the opposition were also reported. On 12 August, two UNDOF vehicles were fired upon by an unidentified gunman. There were no injuries to troops or damage to either vehicle.

In Lebanon, the relative calm during the reporting period ended tragically with the devastating bomb explosion on 15 August in the Beirut suburb of Rouweiss, in which at least 24 people were killed and more than 300 injured. The Secretary-General strongly condemned the bombing — the deadliest such incident since 2005 — stressing the international community's continued support for Lebanon and urging all Lebanese to remain united, rally around their State institutions and safeguard their country's security and stability. President Sleiman convened the Higher Defence Council, which called for apprehending "those behind terrorist attacks in Lebanon". A previously unknown group, the Brigades of Aisha, claimed responsibility and threatened further attacks.

Other security incidents included the firing on 1 August of two rockets in the Yarze suburb of Beirut, where the Presidential Palace and Defense Ministry are located. On 4 August, the explosion of an IED uncovered at least 18 more ready-to-use IEDs, maps and future targets. On 18 August, the discovery of a vehicle containing 250 kilograms of explosives in Naameh, south of Beirut, led to the arrest of four people in connection with a car bombing ring.

The Syrian crisis continued to affect Lebanon's stability, especially in the border areas. On 18 August, five rockets struck Hermel without casualties. On 11 August, the mayor of Arsal was hurt when his convoy came under fire in the town of Al-Labweh. On 8 August, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) arrested three gunmen attempting to cross the border via Arsal, confiscating weapons and a suicide vest. On 9 August, two Turkish pilots were kidnapped on the road from Beirut International Airport in an incident believed to be linked to the abduction of Lebanese pilgrims in Syria.

Despite the efforts of Prime Minister-designate Salam, progress in forming a Government has yet to be seen. However, a 2 August decree to renew the term of the LAF Commander and the Chief of Staff for two years helped ensure institutional continuity in the Army. In a speech on Army Day, President Sleiman stated that the Army's duty will be difficult if one or more Lebanese actors were involved in extraterritorial conflicts, thereby causing external crises to be imported.

The area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) remained generally calm, despite almost daily Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace. UNIFIL, in coordination with the parties, is investigating the circumstances of an explosion in the Labouneh area, north of the Blue Line, on 7 August, in which four Israel Defense Forces personnel were reportedly injured. Preliminary findings confirm the presence of the IDF at the location, in violation of the Blue Line and in breach of the terms of the

cessation of hostilities and of resolution 1701 (2006). In a letter dated 14 August, Lebanon protested the incident. Determination is pending as to whether any other violation, such as the presence of unauthorized weapons or armed personnel, was involved. Hizbullah chief Hassan Nasrallah publicly claimed responsibility for the explosions, stating that Hizbullah fighters planted and detonated bombs as part of a controlled and deliberate operation.

In conclusion, despite an ever-challenging regional environment, we are finally observing long-awaited movement in the peace process in the form of direct negotiations. Let me stress our hope that such efforts mark a first opportunity to overcome the recent years of shared frustration at the political deadlock. Last week, we witnessed a promising opening in the efforts under way to develop a meaningful political initiative on the Israeli-Palestinian issue. We have now reached a decisive point. The test will be for both sides to go the distance and not disappoint their peoples. Now is also the moment to translate our collective call for action into a shared sense of urgency as leaders on both sides must realize that they have an opening that they cannot afford to lose. The Secretary-General and the United Nations, together with the Quartet, will continue to provide all possible support to their efforts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Fernandez-Taranco for his briefing.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7021

Security Council

Distr.: General
22 August 2013

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7021st (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 22 August 2013, at 10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 22 August 2013, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7021st meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Ms. Karin Landgren, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia and Head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, via video-teleconference from Monrovia.

"Members of the Council, Ms. Landgren and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

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United Nations S/PV.7022

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7022nd meeting
Friday, 23 August 2013, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Perceval	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mrs. Jafarova
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Kadiri
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

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13-43772 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Pursuant to rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, I invite the representative of the Sudan and the representative of South Sudan to participate in today's meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Following consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council expresses its continued support for the efforts of the African Union (AU) to facilitate the Sudan's and South Sudan's implementation of their bilateral agreements and compliance with the requirements of the African Union road map and resolution 2046 (2012). The Council recalls in this regard the communiqué adopted by the ministerial meeting of the AU Peace and Security Council held on 29 July, the communiqué adopted by the AU and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on 22 July and the mechanisms outlined by the Chair of the AU High-level Implementation Panel, President Thabo Mbeki, in his 9 June letter to President Omar Hassan A. Al-Bashir and President Salva Kiir. It also welcomes the extension of the mandate of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

"The Security Council expresses grave concern about continued challenges to the implementation of the 27 September 2012 cooperation agreements, and calls on all parties to urgently: implement fully and immediately the 27 September cooperation agreements and all other relevant agreements; make effective use of the joint and other mechanisms that have been established to do so; cooperate with the High-level Implementation Panel, the African Union and IGAD; and refrain from pursuing any actions that run counter to these objectives.

"The Security Council recalls that resolution 2046 (2012), inter alia, prohibits both States from supporting any rebel groups operating against the other State and further recalls relevant agreements between the Sudan and South Sudan to that end. The Council welcomes the establishment and the commencement of work of the ad hoc investigative mechanism to look into allegations of such support and the commitment by both Governments to accept the mechanism's findings.

"The Security Council welcomes the creation of the AU border programme technical team to determine conclusively the safe demilitarized border zone centre line on the ground, and reiterates that the centre line in no way prejudices the current or future legal status of the border, ongoing negotiations on the disputed and claimed areas and demarcation of the border. The Council welcomes both Governments' commitments to accept the technical team's findings.

"The Security Council urges the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to maintain dialogue to ensure continued transportation of oil from South Sudan, and the Government of the Sudan to suspend any actions to halt the transportation of oil from South Sudan to allow these mechanisms to complete their work.

"The Security Council supports the African Union Peace and Security Council's calls for full cooperation with the Abyei Area Joint Investigation and Inquiry Committee's investigation into the killing of a United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei peacekeeper and the Ngok Dinka paramount chief.

"The Security Council reiterates its grave concern about the highly volatile situation in the Abyei Area, and stresses that the parties must immediately implement pending aspects of the 20 June 2011 Agreement on Temporary Security and Administrative Arrangements for the Abyei Area, in particular to resolve the dispute over the Abyei Area Council and immediately establish the Abyei Area administration and Abyei police service. The Council recalls their decision in resolution 2046 (2012) that the parties must resume immediately negotiations to reach agreement on the Abyei final status under the auspices of the High-level Implementation Panel. In this regard, the Council calls for swift action to disarm communities in Abyei in accordance with the decision of the Abyei

Joint Oversight Committee to turn Abyei into a weapons-free zone, which it welcomed in resolution 2104 (2013).

"The Security Council calls upon the Government of the Sudan and Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North to cease hostilities and engage in direct talks to end the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. The Council also calls on all parties to refrain from any acts of violence against civilians, to expedite safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the timely and full delivery of humanitarian aid to all civilians in urgent need of assistance in accordance with relevant provisions of international law, including international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance, and to fully respect international human rights law and international humanitarian law. In this regard, it emphasizes that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law must be held accountable."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2013/14.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Osman (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express our gratitude to your presidency of the Council this month, Madam President, and for the importance you have attached to the discussion of the presidential statement you have just read to us (S/PRST/2013/14). At the same time, we would like to thank all Council members who have participated in the discussions on the statement.

We are satisfied with the content of several of the statement's paragraphs, which welcomes the extension of the mandate of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel owing to the continued progress that has been made by the African Union through that mechanism. The extension of its mandate is directly due to those developments.

In addition, we welcome the fact that the Council has referred in a positive light to the commencement of work by the African Union border programme technical team to delineate the border line, which is extremely important in determining the safe demilitarized border zone and which will probably resolve several outstanding issues between the two countries. In that regard, I reaffirm my country's commitment to implementing the outcome of the work of the group that will be determining the demilitarized border zone.

I would like to mention what is contained in the paragraph that addresses the situation in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states and the provision of assistance to those regions. I reiterate that the Government of the Sudan has always cooperated and will continue to cooperate to ensure that urgent assistance is provided to those two regions. The Council is surely also aware of that the obstacles and the non-delivery of such assistance is due to the fact that the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)-North and some other parties have rejected the tripartite initiative of the African Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which we have accepted. I would like to repeat that when the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General is able to convince the other party to implement that initiative, we will also be prepared to do the same. I would therefore have hoped that the Council would have been able to explain who the responsible party was for creating those obstacles, rather than putting the parties on an equal footing, which is not actually true in the case of the humanitarian situation in the regions of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile.

I had also hoped that, in that paragraph, the Council would have condemned the position of SPLA-North and referred to the other rebel groups that support it, as they have terrorized civilians and exposed them to killings and displacements in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. The fact that this was not explicitly mentioned could encourage the rebels to continue terrorizing civilians and exposing them to various types of violence, murder and displacement. I would have appreciated that.

I thank the Council and would like to reiterate that we remain in contact with Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Joint Special Envoy for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, who is today beginning negotiations in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, to convince the rebels to join the peace process. We have reiterated at all levels that the Sudan intends to continue to negotiate with them in order for them to join the peace process and move towards stability and peace in the Sudan. That will have a positive effect not only on the Sudan but also on our brothers in South Sudan and the region as a whole. We therefore appeal to all the members of the Council that could make a difference to try to influence the rebels to

come to the negotiating table so that we can peacefully resolve the conflict.

I again thank the Council. Perhaps I will be able to take the floor again to shed light on certain points that may require it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Ajawin (South Sudan): At the outset, please allow my delegation to express our sincere gratitude to the members of the Security Council for having afforded us this opportunity to come to this important meeting to discuss the Sudan and South Sudan and to say a few words with regard to the issues. As this is the first time that I take the floor, I would also like to wish you, Madam President, a successful presidency of the Council.

My Government would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to working towards improving relations with the Republic of the Sudan in the promotion of two viable States. Furthermore, the Government is indeed pleased with the current progress being made with the Government of the Republic of the Sudan on the implementation of the cooperation agreements of 27 September, in compliance with the African Union road map on resolution 2046 (2012). We believe that this conducive environment will no doubt provide fertile ground for tangible progress in the bilateral relations between our two States. It has always been my Government's contention that, given our historical links and our geographic borders of almost 2,000 kilometres — one of the biggest in Africa — the relationship between our two countries can be maintained only through peaceful coexistence in all spheres — economic, social and political. We therefore hope that the signs of good relations that we are witnessing so far will continue.

On the issue of Abyei, it is our belief that the people of Abyei have suffered long enough and that the time has come for them to exercise their inalienable rights within the time frame set out in the Abyei Protocol. We call on the members of the Security Council to continue to exert efforts to ensure that the two countries hold a referendum on Abyei in a timely manner, as well as perhaps to facilitate the necessary logistics required for carrying out the referendum.

My delegation would like to conclude with that, but will be willing to take the floor later to intervene on other remaining issues to which we want to draw the Council's attention.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3:50 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7023

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 August 2013

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 7023rd (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 26 August 2013, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 26 August 2013, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 7023rd meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

"Members of the Council, Ms. Honoré and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

13-45861 (E) 260813

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United Nations S/PV.7024

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7024th meeting
Wednesday, 28 August 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Rossi	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mrs. Le Fraper du Hellen
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Farham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2013/493)

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13-45967 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Expression of welcome to His Excellency Mr. Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like, at the outset of the meeting, to extend, on behalf of the Council, a warm welcome to the new Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Liu Jieyi, who will join us for today's meeting. We very much look forward to collaborating closely with him.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question concerning Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (S/2013/493)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Haiti, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/493, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

I now give the floor to Ms. Honoré.

Ms. Honoré (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Republic of Argentina, in its capacity as President of the Security Council this month, and to all members for organizing this meeting, whose purpose is to present to the Council the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2013/493).

I am also pleased to have an opportunity to share with the Council, for the first time in my capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, an assessment of the most recent developments in the political and security situations in Haiti, as well as an overview of MINUSTAH's activities in the past few months in supporting peacebuilding and political stability and in strengthening the rule of law.

(*spoke in French*)

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the presence in the Chamber of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Haiti.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I would like to begin my report with special thanks to all the countries that are contributing troops and police units to MINUSTAH and to all those Member States that have cooperated in the stabilization and reconstruction process for their valuable support for the consolidation of peace and democracy in Haiti.

(*spoke in English*)

Since my predecessor's most recent briefing to the Security Council last March (see S/PV.6936), the overall security situation in Haiti has remained relatively stable, with a decrease in both civil unrest and major crimes. Statistics show a downward trend in homicides, kidnappings and incidents of violent civil unrest during the first half of the year, as compared to the same period in 2012. However, we have recently seen an increased occurrence of politically motivated protests linking socioeconomic grievances with broader anti-Government messages, including dissatisfaction with the ongoing electoral stalemate.

With the support of the United Nations police, the performance of the Haitian National Police has improved as it has continued to assume increased responsibility for the provision of internal security, particularly in the 4 of the country's 10 regions vacated by MINUSTAH's military component. Nevertheless, MINUSTAH's military and police continue to play an important role in supporting the National Police in maintaining overall security and stability. The further

strengthening of the National Police remains a critical stabilization benchmark, particularly as MINUSTAH proceeds to consolidate.

Turning to the political situation, the continued delay in the holding of long-overdue partial senatorial, municipal and local elections is of increasing concern and poses a series of risks to the stabilization process. Yesterday's long-awaited submission to Parliament by President Martelly of the draft electoral law that is required to launch the electoral process is a most welcome development. However, there have been protracted delays caused, in part, by the eight months that it took the three branches of Government to designate the nine members of the Electoral Council, which was eventually established in April 2013, followed by the delayed submission of the draft electoral law by the Electoral Council to the executive, and by the executive to Parliament.

Despite the executive branch's repeated public statements in favour of holding the elections as soon as possible, those delays have led a number of political and civil society actors to express skepticism concerning the likelihood that elections will be held in 2013.

(*spoke in French*)

If the provisions of the 2008 electoral law were to be implemented and the Senate elections were not held by January 2014, the Senate, and, as a logical consequence, the Parliament, could become ineffective. That would represent a genuine setback in the democratic process, which Haiti does not have the luxury to afford. In such a case, a possible mobilization of opposition forces and civil society could not be excluded, which would destabilize the political and security situation.

(*spoke in English*)

Delays in the submission of the draft electoral law by the executive to Parliament fuelled speculation among legislators that the executive had intentionally delayed the process to ensure that Parliament would become non-functional. That perception united a grouping of main opposition parties that repeatedly and publicly called on President Martelly to uphold the constitutional requirement of timely elections, or else to resign, thus popularizing the chant calling for "elections or resignation".

Meanwhile, a controversy has erupted concerning the sudden death, on 13 July, of a judge who had subpoenaed the Prime Minister and other senior Government officials in the context of an investigation into allegations of corruption concerning members of the first family. Observers have expressed concern about the independence of the judiciary, following a series of controversial arrest warrants issued against persons related to the investigation of the alleged corruption case. In the meantime, special commissions of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies have investigated the circumstances of the judge's death.

In that climate of polarization and heightened mutual suspicion, I have been engaging Haiti's key political actors on both sides of the divide to promote dialogue aimed at reaching a minimum agreement on the way forward, particularly concerning the elections. I have also met regularly with members of the diplomatic corps accredited in Haiti, including troop-contributing countries, to ensure that every effort is made to guarantee the continuity of the country's institutions, most notably the continued functioning of Parliament beyond January 2014. It is important that we, as the international community, remain united in our common message and speak with one voice.

With regard to MINUSTAH's conditions-based consolidation, the military and police components completed their mandated reduction of personnel during the reporting period, in accordance with resolution 2070 (2012). The Mission stands ready to proceed with further adjustments in troop strength as may be mandated by the Council in October.

Concerning cholera, as of 29 June, the epidemic had caused the deaths of 8,173 persons and infected more than 660,000. The budget of the national plan for the elimination of cholera amounts to $443.7 million for the period 2013 to 2015, of which roughly 47 per cent has been pledged. The United Nations continues to support the Government of Haiti with the various short- and medium-term priorities that need to be addressed to eliminate cholera transmission in the country.

My predecessor, as well as MINUSTAH's Deputy Special Representative, and I have met on several occasions with President Martelly and Prime Minister Lamothe to explain the ongoing reduction of MINUSTAH's footprint and the Mission's consolidation plan with its four areas of stabilization benchmarks. Both leaders have expressed support for a phased withdrawal of the Mission as the capacity of national institutions increases. In that regard, a joint Government-MINUSTAH working group was established in April to monitor the gradual and orderly

transfer of responsibilities to the Government. It is vital that the Government, with MINUSTAH's support, continue to work on multiple fronts to advance progress towards the stabilization benchmarks.

The gains in stability and security need to be sustained in order for Haiti to succeed in its ongoing effort to forge economic partnerships, attract foreign investment and foster socioeconomic development — the cornerstone of enduring stability.

Concerning the police development benchmarks, achieving the targets of the 2012-2016 police development plan will require the continued commitment of the Government and Member States to ensure that the appropriate funding is made available to support a professional, reliable and accountable police force. Outstanding challenges include insufficient regional coverage by the police force, due to staffing shortages, and the need to continue strengthening the institution's management and administrative capacity and its Inspectorate General.

The delays in the establishment of the Electoral Council and the lack of clarity on the electoral law have so far impaired the electoral body's capacity to significantly advance preparations for the electoral process. Nevertheless, the Electoral Council has issued a request for its operational costs to be included in the 2013-2014 national budget and the Council's Director General and Council members have started their electoral planning. MINUSTAH's objective is to create the conditions that will allow the Government of Haiti to progressively assume greater responsibility for the management of the electoral process.

With regard to respect for the rule of law, although the oversight and accountability mechanisms provided for in the Constitution have been established, it is critical that the Government and its international partners continue to build the capacity of those institutions. For example, without the establishment of a strong inspectorate for the vetting of judicial appointments, the Superior Council of the Judiciary will not be able to effectively exercise oversight. Strengthening the rule of law also entails allowing key oversight institutions to operate independently.

With regard to the Mission's governance benchmarks, MINUSTAH has concentrated its good offices efforts on promoting dialogue among national stakeholders to overcome the electoral stalemate. During the reporting period, the strained relations between the executive branch and Parliament impeded the adoption of a consensual legislative agenda, another key governance indicator. That situation impaired progress on crucial legislative reform, such as the law against money laundering, the law on the financing of political parties and the revision of the criminal code and the criminal procedure code.

(spoke in French)

In conclusion, Haiti is at a critical juncture. Indeed, progress in the fields of security and stabilization, as well as the concerted efforts of the Martelly/Lamothe Government for socioeconomic development, could be jeopardized by the instability resulting from the polarization linked to the election stalemate. MINUSTAH, in close consultation with its international partners, continues to work to convince national stakeholders that a minimum political consensus that makes it possible to hold elections as soon as possible and an agreement on the continuity of institutions are in their best interest and that of the nation.

To that end, the interest shown by national stakeholders for dialogue as a means of a means of reaching an agreement is one reason to remain optimistic and should be encouraged. A mediation initiative, as well our intensified efforts to promote dialogue among national actors, could form the basis of an inter-Haitian process that would be able to overcome the current stalemate and prevent a potential crisis that could have an affect on the stability of Haiti.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

The search for avenues to facilitate dialogue and consensus among Haitians is essential in building a country able to stand on its own, with democratic institutions that will give concrete answers to the many challenges that lie ahead and take Haiti out of the institutional cyclical crisis that has characterized it, and very often paralyzed it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Honoré for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Sandra Honoré for her briefing, which, together with the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/493), show that real progress is occurring in Haiti, while more work is needed to ensure that it lasts.

The United States reaffirms its support for the Secretary-General's conditions-based consolidation plan for MINUSTAH and his recommendation for the withdrawal of additional military elements, provided that conditions on the ground allow for it and that the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) maintains a robust, quick-reaction capability. Political stability, in particular, is crucial to continued progress in Haiti. The establishment of the transitional Electoral Council was an important step, but the ongoing delay in the scheduling of local municipal and senatorial elections is worrying. The elections must be held as soon as possible and need to be credible, free, fair and inclusive. To that end, we welcome the submission of the draft electoral law to the Parliament and urge Haiti's political leaders to work together now to publish a new electoral law that fully accords with Haiti's Constitution. In that regard the United States very much appreciates Special Representative Honoré's efforts to promote dialogue among Haiti's political actors.

Political stability requires security and, therefore, that recent security gains be sustained, such as the improved performance of the Haitian National Police and reinvigorated police recruitment efforts, which are critical for Haiti's future. We encourage MINUSTAH to maintain capacity-building of the Haitian National Police as its highest priority. That should include strong recruitment and retention efforts to ensure that the force reaches its goal of 15,000 officers by 2016, with an emphasis on recruiting women and expert personnel capable of addressing the needs that the Secretary-General identified in his report.

The United States would like to see MINUSTAH's community-violence reduction programmes sustained, as they increase public safety by offering at-risk youth productive employment and reduce their vulnerability to gang recruitment. For the sake of long-term security, better policing cannot happen in isolation but must be accompanied by improvements in the rule of law. The United States therefore strongly supports MINUSTAH's assistance to Haitian institutions responsible for ensuring the rule of law. We also welcome the new United Nations Rule of Law Working Group coordination mechanism, which should coordinate closely with civil society, donors and the Government of Haiti to identify priorities for the justice sector and set concrete, realistic benchmarks for Haiti's rule-of-law priorities, including the protection of human rights for all Haitians.

In that vein, the Government's establishment of the interministerial commission on human rights to promote and protect human rights is a positive step. The Government's statement in July calling for tolerance and rejecting violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people was another welcome development.

Indeed, protecting Haiti's most vulnerable citizens must also remain a priority for the Haitian Government and for MINUSTAH. Sexual and gender-based violence tragically persists in Haiti. It is a significant problem, one that MINUSTAH must continue to address, including by training police to prevent and respond to such crimes. Meanwhile, the voluntary resettlement of displaced persons should continue in a manner that fully respects the rights of the displaced, while those in the camps must have adequate services and security.

The health and well-being of the Haitian people are important to the United States. As part of our broad assistance programme in Haiti, and in coordination with the United Nations and other donors, we continue to support the Haitian Government's efforts to treat and prevent cholera.

Before concluding, I want to reinforce our support for MINUSTAH's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. Such incidents are unacceptable stains on MINUSTAH and the United Nations. We encourage continuing and determined efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as other misconduct by peacekeepers.

Finally, let me reiterate the deep gratitude of the United States to those serving in MINUSTAH, who work tirelessly every day to improve the lives of the Haitian people.

As MINUSTAH moves forward with the conditions-based consolidation plan, the United States welcomes the Secretary-General's forthcoming examination of how the United Nations can best continue to contribute to Haiti's stabilization and development.

Although key challenges remain, Haiti is becoming more stable. The United States remains committed to working with the Government and people of Haiti, as well as the United Nations and international partners, to build a more secure and prosperous future for the country.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): We are grateful to the Secretary-General for submitting the report on

the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2013/493), as well as providing an update on progress made during the reporting period towards the implementation of the mission consolidation plan outlined in his previous report (S/2013/139). We welcome the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, to the Council and thank her for presenting the report of the Secretary-General.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to commend MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team, which continue to play an important role in supporting the recovery and stabilization of Haiti.

As the Secretary-General emphasized in his report, the progress made in the stabilization of Haiti since the initial deployment of MINUSTAH, in 2004, has been considerable. The overall security situation in the country remained relatively stable throughout the reporting period, with a decrease in both civil unrest and major crimes. The performance of the Haitian National Police (HNP) continues to improve as it assumes increased responsibility for the provision of internal security. We also commend the Government for its efforts to move forward with socioeconomic development that has resulted, inter alia, in a significant increase in economic partnership.

At the same time, Haiti continues to face numerous challenges. As the Secretary-General pointed out, the democratic process in Haiti remains vulnerable to setbacks linked to political instability and infighting among the branches of the Government. It is important that all political actors in Haiti engage in a constructive dialogue to preserve the progress achieved so far and address their differences in a spirit of compromise. Such dialogue is particularly important for reaching a minimum political consensus on holding long-overdue elections as soon as possible and on the key legislative priorities. It is essential that the United Nations continue to support the upcoming elections and contribute to the progress on the launch of the electoral process.

It is also important to maintain progress made in building the capacity of the HNP. Further efforts are needed to strengthen key rule-of-law institutions, reform the security sector, attract investment, promote sustainable development and advance the democratic agenda. The protection of vulnerable groups, particularly women, children and internally displaced persons, should remain the priority. Significant strides were made regarding the resettlement of persons displaced by the 2010 earthquake, although their protection, along with food insecurity, rapidly decreasing humanitarian funding and continuing deep and structural weakness, remains a concern. Continued strong international engagement and efforts by the Haitian authorities are crucial to improve the current humanitarian situation, in particular with regard to the ongoing cholera epidemic.

In conclusion, we take note of the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General that, in accordance with resolution 2070 (2012), the military and police components completed the mandated reduction of their personnel during the reporting period. The role of MINUSTAH in the maintenance of overall security and stability in the country remains vital. Azerbaijan supports the extension of the Mission's mandate for an additional year. It is important that the possible further reduction in the Mission's uniform strength, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report, be based on the security and political situation on the ground. We look forward to the next report of the Secretary-General and the proposals on the way forward on its part.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Argentina for organizing, under its presidency of the Council, this debate on Haiti, which is elevated by your presence, Mr. President. I would also like to congratulate the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Ms. Sandra Honoré, on her appointment, and I would like to thank her for her very thorough briefing. We wish her every success in carrying out her functions.

Luxembourg associates itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

Like Ms. Honoré, we believe that Haiti is at a critical turning point. We recognize the significant progress that has been made in Haiti since the earthquake that struck the country in January 2010. However, we are also aware of the many difficulties that the stabilization process continues to face.

In order to remedy that, priority must be given to holding, as soon as possible, free, regular, credible elections that are open to everyone. The establishment of the transitional college of the Permanent Electoral Council on 19 April was a step in the right direction. We also welcome the establishment, on 24 June, of a joint taskforce made up of representatives of the transitional college, MINUSTAH, the United Nations

Development Programme and of various ministries that have been charged by the Prime Minister to accelerate preparations for elections. We welcome the fact that the path towards elections and the draft law was submitted yesterday by President Martelly to the Parliament. That action must be followed up by determined action on behalf of all political actors to see that elections are held as soon as possible.

Luxembourg supports the efforts of MINUSTAH to assist with the electoral process, including the goal of greater participation by women in the electoral process.

Given the scale of the challenges that need to be confronted, it is essential that Haiti, with the support of the international community, create a system of governance that is effective and inclusive and capable of meeting the needs of Haitians. The stalemate between the executive and legislative branches cannot continue. We fully support the assertion made by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2013/493) that any consensus on the issue of elections must be accompanied by the identification of major legislative priorities to promote the strengthening of institutions, protect investments and ensure respect for human rights.

The establishment of the rule of law has only been moving forward slowly, and the system of justice lacks independence from political power. In his report, the Secretary-General rightly mentions the need to bring an end to the climate of impunity. The case that is under way against former President Jean-Claude Duvalier represents an important test in that regard. It is also necessary to strengthen respect for human rights, specifically by protecting as well as possible vulnerable groups. In spite of the commendable efforts of MINUSTAH's group on the protection of children, much violence, including sexual violence, is still being committed against children. We noted with concern the mention in the Secretary-General's report of cases of child slavery.

On a more positive note, we would like to note that the security situation has remained relatively stable. We can see a reduction in civil unrest and major crime. The Haitian National Police is growing stronger, and the police force has improved its services, specifically in terms of ensuring security in the four departments that MINUSTAH military forces have now left. We should also welcome the more effective recruitment of cadets in order to achieve the goal of recruiting 15,000 police officers by 2016. Of course, strengthening the Haitian National Police must go hand in hand with professionalism. In that regard, we are worried by cases of the police resorting to excessive force.

The humanitarian situation in the country also remains worrying. One and a half million people are suffering from severe food insecurity, including a significant number of children under 5. The cholera epidemic, which has cost more than 8,000 lives, is continuing to ravage the country. We welcome the initiative launched last December by the Secretary-General aimed at eliminating cholera in Haiti.

The international community must assist the affected populations. For its part, Luxembourg remains actively committed to helping Haiti overcome the challenges of the humanitarian situation and those associated with rebuilding the country.

To conclude, Luxembourg reaffirms its support for MINUSTAH's adaptable consolidation plan for the stabilization of Haiti, which has been developed jointly with Haitian authorities for the period 2013-2016. It is important for MINUSTAH to focus its attention on the main tasks that can be achieved within a reasonable amount of time. We welcome the ideas and thought processes under way to pursue MINUSTAH's mid-term reconfiguration. While we wait for the proposals that will appear on that subject in the next report of the Secretary-General, my country remains in favour of renewing the mandate of MINUSTAH for one year, until 15 October 2014.

Ms. King (Australia): We welcome your presence here today, Mr. President. We also welcome the new Permanent Representative of China. We congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her appointment, and we thank her for her first briefing on the situation in Haiti. We commend personnel from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), who have worked tirelessly on the ground with the Government and the people of Haiti to rebuild that country. Much of that work has been done in the face of natural disasters and an ongoing cholera epidemic. While there is still much work to be done, there has been much encouraging news, including in the latest report (S/2013/493) of the Secretary-General.

Since the Security Council last discussed Haiti, in March (see S/PV.6936), some necessary steps towards holding long overdue elections have been taken. The President's submission to Parliament of a draft electoral law yesterday is the latest of those, and it is very

welcome. It remains, however, a matter of great concern that elections continue to be delayed. It is critical to Haiti's recovery, reconstruction and development that free, fair, inclusive and credible elections be held as soon as possible. We urge all political actors to work towards building the political consensus required to establish the legislation necessary for elections to be held and for MINUSTAH to continue to provide electoral assistance and logistical support for those elections.

Political stability and economic development in Haiti are also closely linked. We welcome President Martelly's emphasis on strengthening institutions so as to facilitate foreign investment in support of socioeconomic development. We note that efforts to attract foreign investment have resulted in a significant increase in economic partnerships. Integration into the Caribbean region should also assist Haiti's development. The Haitian President's engagement with the region is welcome. For the first time, Haiti assumed the six-month rotating chairmanship of the Caribbean Community and hosted the Caribbean Community and Common Market Heads of Government meeting. While those are all welcome developments, real change requires sustainable development, growth and regional cooperation and consistent efforts to ensure that the ongoing risk of political instability, as outlined by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, not jeopardize progress.

An emphasis by MINUSTAH on building the capacity of the Haitian National Police continues to show results, as demonstrated by increased policing, a responsibility assumed by the local authorities. Close cooperation between MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police has shown results in combating violence and crime. On that basis and conditioned by the realities on the ground, we agree with the Secretary-General's proposal for a further reduction in the military component of MINUSTAH.

We commend the Secretary-General's ongoing efforts to eliminate cholera in Haiti. Funding and coordinating the activities of the various stakeholders are, however, still a main challenge. To eradicate that disease, coordination among Haitian national agencies, multilateral organizations and other partners is crucial.

We remain deeply concerned by sexual and gender-based violence, including against minors. We are also deeply concerned by the recent increase in homophobic violence in Haiti.

We commend MINUSTAH for its swift response in issuing a press release on 16 August calling for tolerance amongt all Haitians. We urge the Haitian Government to continue to work with MINUSTAH to increase efforts to support the prevention of further incidents, promote respect for human rights and strengthen the judicial process.

We appreciate the inclusion in the Secretary-General's report of a progress report on MINUSTAH's consolidation plan and note the establishment of a joint Government-MINUSTAH working group to monitor the gradual and orderly transfer of responsibilities to the Government. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's intention, in his next report, to present options for the involvement of the United Nations in Haiti beyond 2016. We look forward to engaging with Haiti and other Member States on the best way for Haiti to transition away from United Nations support, to strengthen institutions and governance, which provide security, justice and jobs, and to break the cycle of poverty and violence.

Mr. Loulichki. (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, at the outset, to express my congratulations for a very successful Argentine presidency of the Security Council during this month of August, which has been very busy and has demanded the active participation of the presidency and all members of the Council until the very end of August. I would also like to congratulate Ms. Sandra Honoré on her appointment as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I welcome her presence here and thank her for her thorough briefing. We would also like to express our full appreciation to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for the work accomplished so far. Finally, I would like to welcome our new colleague, the Permanent Representative of China, Mr. Liu Jieyi, on the occasion of his first participation in our work. I wish him all the very best.

Morocco welcomes the concerted efforts by the Haitian authorities in various areas, especially those to develop its police force, strengthen capacities for elections and promote and ensure respect for human rights, as well as good governance.

Politically speaking, the establishment of a transitional college of the permanent Electoral Council, as well as the advances made in the implementation of the Government's "five Es" policy programme, are positive developments, which we welcome. Now

the constitutional work needs to be finalized so as to enable legislative, municipal and local elections to take place as soon as possible. It is a positive sign that yesterday, as the Special Representative indicated, President Martelly submitted a draft law on elections to the Parliament. We would like these elections to be accelerated, and all parties, including MINUSTAH, should assist. We would like to support Ms. Honoré's efforts in that regard, in particular the announcement and adoption of electoral laws and the promotion of dialogue among the various political stakeholders in order to find a consensus that would enable elections to be held as soon as possible .

Concerning security, the collective action of MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police are beginning to bear fruit, thus contributing to progressive and noticeable improvements in the country. The strengthening of recruitment for and capacity development of the Haitian National Police, in accordance with the 2012-2016 development plan, has enabled the police to take on greater responsibility, allowing the withdrawal of MINUSTAH from four departments. In that regard, the decrease by 50 per cent in the number of criminal acts and kidnappings as compared to 2012 is also extremely reassuring.

On the humanitarian situation, although encouraging results have been achieved in terms of rehousing displaced persons by the end of 2013, 279,000 people continue to be housed in 352 camps in deplorable sanitary conditions. Furthermore, the persistence of food insecurity, which was exacerbated by the impact of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, is still affecting almost 1.5 million people.

Aware of its primary responsibility in improving the socioeconomic situation of its population, the Government invested greatly during the reporting period in promoting and attracting foreign investment. Such efforts should be encouraged, especially given the roll-back in international assistance.

Since its establishment, MINUSTAH has decisively contributed to the efforts to stabilize the country. We commend the Mission's staff for the work that they have accomplished up to this point in spite of the difficulties and obstacles they have faced. While we support the Haitian Government in its efforts to assume its responsibilities, specifically for security and socioeconomic development, we call on MINUSTAH to continue to pursue its valuable support for the Haitian authorities, in close collaboration with the country team and Haiti's regional and international partners.

A short time ago, the Special Representative welcomed and underscored the efforts of senior Haitian officials in the areas of security, reconstruction and the economy. Also in that regard, it is correct to insist on the importance of holding elections as soon as possible. The Haitian political forces are therefore urged at this very crucial stage of the modern history of their country to transcend their differences and put the national interests above their partisan interests in order to ensure the stability of Haiti and the well-being of its people. We hope that they will be up to the task of assuming that responsibility. We are certain that they will spare no effort to achieve that stability, bring Haiti back to a state of normality and launch the sustainable development of the country.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We thank you, Sir, for presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. We welcome Special Representative of the Secretary-General Sandra Honoré and thank her for her insightful briefing. We also thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report (S/2013/493), which gives concrete recommendations for the way forward.

Peace and progress in Haiti are shared objectives of the Haitian people, the Security Council and the international community. There has been an impressive turnaround. The brave and resilient people of Haiti have made important strides towards stability, growth and development. The devastating earthquake in 2010 and Hurricane Sandy reversed the gains achieved over many years. But today we see a new Haiti emerging from those tragedies. Challenges persist, but the resolve of the Haitian people to build their country is stronger.

Haiti has reached important milestones. It is on the road to political stability and economic progress. The consolidation plan seems to be on track, by and large. President Martelly's outreach for foreign investment in support of job creation and socioeconomic development has led to new economic partnerships and opportunities. The implementation of projects for the construction of roads, schools, clinics, agricultural production and reforestation will give a much needed boost to the economy.

There is progress in other areas, too. The Government's focus on national solidarity and institution-building, especially the establishment of the transitional Electoral Council, are positive signals for

the Haitian people and the Council. The performance of the National Police has improved. There has been a decrease in civil unrest and major crimes. The resettlement of people displaced by the 2010 earthquake has been moving apace. President Martelly's assumption of the Chair of the Caribbean Community give. Haiti a new stature in the region.

As pointed out by the Secretary-General, some remaining serious problems could imperil the progress made so far. The differences between the executive and the Parliament should be resolved expeditiously to reach consensus to hold partial senatorial, municipal and local elections. Delay in those elections will have a negative impact on the next set of elections in 2014, undermine the ongoing democratic process and adversely affect economic goals. The Haitian Government and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) should continue to work together to achieve stabilization benchmarks. The Haitian Government needs to allocate more funds to the Electoral Council and National Police to ensure that they stand on their feet and that their performance is optimal. At the same time, the Haitian Government's requirements to overcome capacity impediments and the management of the electoral process must be recognized and met by international assistance.

Haiti needs a strong security sector. Steps taken by Haitian authorities to reinvigorate police recruitment and training are encouraging. Objectives and benchmarks in development plans for the Haitian National Police presented by MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police itself must be met to support a professional, reliable and accountable police force.

With regard to rule-of-law institutions, two issues are most important. Haiti's international partners should do all they can to build the capacities of those institutions. For its part, the Haitian Government should guarantee the independence of the National Police, the Superior Council of the Judiciary and the Anti-Corruption Unit. The goals of eradication of cholera, food security and preparedness for natural disasters must continue to be pursued vigorously. We urge greater coordination and cohesion among different actors engaged in humanitarian work. Donor fatigue can result from protracted crises like the one in Haiti. It is therefore imperative for the international community to continue to provide funds and expertise to the country for humanitarian purposes.

All indicators suggest that Haiti is moving towards political stability and economic development. The United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti is a success story. The reconfiguration of MINUSTAH is under way. That process must continue. We hope that, through consultations, the Council will be able to find a plan for contributing to Haiti's stability as it presses ahead with its plans to scale down United Nations assistance by 2016.

A word of caution, however — since 2004, MINUSTAH has done a commendable job in the stabilization of Haiti. The reconfiguration or drawdown of MINUSTAH must therefore be carefully planned. It should not lead to the reversal of gains made in the country; there should be a gradual and orderly transfer of responsibilities.

Pakistan has been a participant in United Nations peacekeeping missions in Haiti since 1993. Presently, one formed police unit from Pakistan comprising 140 personnel is serving in the country. Pakistan supports the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Haiti. We remain a sincere partner of the people of the country in their quest for peace, security, stability and progress.

Mr. Manzi (Rwanda): Your presence here today, Mr. President, is a clear demonstration of the importance you attach to the peace, stability, security and development of the Haitian people. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her informative briefing on the current developments in Haiti and the work of MINUSTAH. We warmly welcome her to the Council, as this is her first briefing, and we wish her all the best in her leadership of MINUSTAH.

We also join others in welcoming the Permanent Representative of China, as this is his first Council meeting. We wish him success in his duties.

At the outset, let me commend the tangible progress achieved under the leadership of President Michel Joseph Martelly, particularly in the security sector, the reconstruction process and various socioeconomic sectors. We welcome the commitment of the Government and its partners to fostering greater alignment of international systems with national priorities, increase transparency and strengthen mutual accountability. We hope that those efforts will lead to the rapid recovery of the Haitian economy.

Rwanda further acknowledges the importance of the contribution of MINUSTAH and the international community in supporting the stabilization process in Haiti, including the strengthening of its legislative, judicial and executive institutions.

It is indeed positive to also note that progress has been made towards to the achievement of the four stabilization benchmarks set out in the MINUSTAH consolidation plan for Haiti. The Government-endorsed United Nations integrated strategic framework for Haiti is a good step in the right direction. It is in that spirit that Rwanda calls upon all the relevant actors and stakeholders to come together around a common development strategy and ensure coherence among the numerous initiatives in support of Haiti's development. We encourage MINUSTAH and the international community to continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Haitian authorities in streagthening Haiti's core governance structures and implementing the Government's action plan for national recovery and development as an efficient and coherent framework.

Following the establishment of the transitional Electoral Council, earlier this year, Rwanda encourages all parties to engage in a constructive dialogue in order to reach a political consensus on the holding of the partial senatorial, municipal and local elections. We believe that the completion of that process will contribute to the consolidation of democracy, allow for the completion of the constitutional reform and provide a strong basis for continuing reconstruction efforts.

With regard to the possible drawdown of MINUSTAH, Rwanda is of the view that the process should be in line with the security and political conditions on the ground, instead of being driven by a stipulated time frame. Furthermore, the Security Council should closely monitor achievements in the implementation of the MINUSTAH consolidation plan.

On the cholera epidemic, Rwanda remains deeply concerned about its devastating consequences for the Haitian population and calls upon all stakeholders, including the United Nations, in close cooperation with the Haitian Government, to continue to mobilize the necessary resources and to assist in the efforts aimed at treating and eradicating the cholera outbreak.

Equally important is the need for the international community to invest more in quick-impact projects, in partnership with the Haitian authorities and civil society, in the areas of agriculture and environmental protection in order to assist the Haitian Government with the challenges in terms of food insecurity.

Finally, Rwanda will continue to support the Government of Haiti in its reconstruction period, as a police- and troop-contributing country to MINUSTAH. Rwanda remains committed and stands ready to assist the Government in professionalizing its police force. It is also a great honour to have Haiti as a member observer of the African Union, and we encourage the Haitian authorities to further become a full member of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of Africa.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): I welcome you to the Security Council, Sir, and Iwould like to warmly welcome as well the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to thank her for her briefing. I would like to record our thanks here also to Mr. Nigel Fisher for his leadership of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) as interim Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

We welcome Haiti's progress since our most recent debate on Haiti (see S/PV.6936) in assuming responsibility for its own security and in fostering an environment that can attract sustainable development. We recognize the important contribution that MINUSTAH is making. We welcome the transfer of responsibility for security in some regions to the Haitian National Police, in line with the core objectives of the 2013-2016 consolidation plan. We note the advances made in Haitian National Police promotion, vetting and training, and we would like to see continued progress in that area.

We are pleased to see Haiti building partnerships for sustainable economic development and taking an increasing role in regional forums. That is crucial, because economic investment will create the basis for Haiti's future stability.

Notwithstanding the progress that continues to be made, we remain concerned that delays in crucial political and democratic processes are holding back the country's development and stability. The continued delay in the holding of planned elections and the negative impact that could have on the ability of the political institutions to function is of particular concern. We call on the Government of Haiti to broker a political agreement that would allow elections to be held this year. Elections are vital to establishing political stability and to building the trust and confidence of

the Haitian people, the international community and potential investors.

An attractive investment climate will be strengthened by Haiti's ability to police itself. We welcome the progress made by the Haitian National Police towards reaching the target of 15,000 active police officers by 2015, but further efforts are required to build their institutional and operational capabilities. As highlighted by the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/493), increased recruitment must be accompanied by improvements in strategic planning, administration, internal affairs and training. For the Haitian National Police to be effective, there must also be reform of the justice sector, to create an independent and impartial judiciary at the regional and national levels.

MINUSTAH should focus its resources and efforts on supporting the Government of Haiti in meeting its obligations to improve the political and security situation in the country. That means getting the configuration of troops and police right. Therefore, while we recognize the positive results of the additional work undertaken by the Mission's engineering teams in supporting quick-impact projects, including road repair, well drilling, draining and canal cleaning, water distribution and the erection of prefabricated units, we believe that those tasks should now be handed over to others — where possible, the local private sector. Where national actors do not yet have the capacity to take on those tasks, all elements of the United Nations system in Haiti need to work together to build that capacity.

We believe that MINUSTAH's continued presence in Haiti remains necessary for now. However, we support the reconfiguration of resources set out in the consolidation plan for 2013-2016, and are encouraged to see that the withdrawal of military peacekeepers has not been detrimental to the security situation in the areas that have been vacated. We support the recommendation to continue, as the situation allows, a balanced withdrawal of troops. We also welcome the Secretary-General's decision to explore the option of a transition to a smaller, more focused assistance mission by 2016, and look forward to hearing more about his proposal. Any significant change to the Mission's configuration should come with credible benchmarks to ensure that the Haitian Government has the support and capacity to shoulder increasing responsibility.

The United Nations presence in Haiti must adapt to the changing circumstances and challenges. Challenges will continue, but will be increasingly related to governance and economic development. The nature of the United Nations presence should adjust accordingly, shifting the balance from peacekeeping to development assistance. The Secretary-General's report and its recommendations provide a good basis for that transition.

MINUSTAH has made some progress over the past 12 months, and we thank all those who have contributed. Looking forward, efforts should focus on further improving the security situation and helping to break the political deadlock, building the conditions for stability, development and growth. MINUSTAH must ensure that the burden of progress is shared with the Government and other partners, and, where appropriate, transferred to them. In June, the United Kingdom opened its first Embassy in Port-au-Prince since 1966, a visible symbol to the Government of Haiti of British support for it on the road to the stability and prosperity that it and its people sorely need and deserve.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to welcome you here and thank you for presiding over the Council this morning, Mr. President. I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome to New York the new Ambassador of China and to wish him every success in carrying out his duties.

I would first like to once again congratulate Ms. Sandra Honoré on her appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and to reiterate my country's full support for her in her new job. I would also like to thank her for her presentation of the semi-annual report (S/2013/493) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). My statement will focus on the political, security and humanitarian aspects of the current situation in Haiti.

The political situation remains worrying, due to the recurring difficulties encountered by the Haitian political class in finding solutions to institutional problems and in working steadfastly to improve their country's governance. Indeed, we are sorry to see that due to various differences, there have been delays in organizing the senatorial, municipal and local elections, despite the political agreement on 19 April that established the transitional Electoral Council and despite the willingness of all Haitian political stakeholders to see the elections held before the end of 2013. It is crucial that those elections, which have been delayed for two years, be held this year in order to ensure political stability, prevent any dysfunction of

the country's institutions and put legitimately elected representatives in charge of the State. In that regard, we welcome the establishment of the joint Government-MINUSTAH-United Nations task force responsible for speeding up the preparation and organization of the elections. We hope that it will bring a speedy end to the delays in approving the electoral law, which is an crucial component of the electoral machine. In that regard, we note that, as Ms. Honoré said, President Martelly brought such an electoral law before Parliament yesterday.

In the area of security, Togo is pleased with the general calm and stability in Haiti. There is no question that the security sector is the most concrete example not only of the country's progress with reconstruction and stabilization but in particular of the effectiveness that local populations have the right to expect from the cooperation between MINUSTAH and the Haitian authorities. As the report indicates, political acts of violence have visibly decreased, as has the percentage of crimes such as murders, rapes and kidnappings. That continuing improvement in the security climate has been made possible by the continued efforts of Haitian leaders, in cooperation with MINUSTAH, to strengthen, train and equip Haitian National Police personnel. Regular police operations, alone or in cooperation with MINUSTAH units, have enabled them to break up many gangs, prevent their criminal activity and substantially reduce criminality and insecurity in the country. Togo urges the Haitian authorities to continue to expand the police force throughout the country and to strengthen its operational capacity. We also call on Haiti's partners to continue to support it in making up the deficit in financing the 2012-2016 development plan for the National Police and enabling it to achieve all the goals of the plan, particularly increasing the number of police officers over the next two years.

Concerning the humanitarian situation, Togo notes that significant progress has been made, especially in resettling displaced persons and with regard to sanitation measures. As the Secretary-General's report indicates, thanks to financial contributions from the international community, more than 34,000 internally displaced persons have been resettled and 33 sites closed. Such significant efforts, however, are counterbalanced by the need for aid, which remains huge. The gradual withdrawal of humanitarian agencies is making living conditions in the camps — where a large number of internally displaced people are still housed — increasingly precarious. Togo is also concerned about the cases of famine and malnutrition, which have been exacerbated in part because of the vagaries of the climate. On top of that, the persisting cases of cholera in weather particularly conducive to its spread leads to fears of a resurgence of the epidemic if the appropriate measures are not taken to suppress it, particularly in the area of water treatment and sanitation. My country urges the international community to continue to stand by the Haitian authorities in order to help them eradicate that scourge once and for all.

Togo believes that, despite the problems presented by political misunderstandings and the threats due to unstable weather and the cholera epidemic, Haiti's overall situation continues to improve, due to the joint efforts of the Haitian Government, MINUSTAH and other international organizations, which have helped to gradually establish encouraging conditions for security, stability and macro-economic performance.

I would like to conclude by commending the major role that MINUSTAH continues to play in Haiti through its involvement in programmes of reconstruction, the maintenance of security and building the rule of law. One of the Mission's most remarkable efforts has been in protecting vulnerable groups, particularly through its fight against sexual and gender-based violence and impunity for serious human-rights violations. We support MINUSTAH's announced restructuring and urge the Haitian authorities to continue to take on the process of restoring and developing their country so that the Mission's disengagement will not weaken the Haitian State.

Mr. Ilichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome your participation in presiding over the Security Council at today's meeting, Sir, thereby demonstrating the importance of the situation in Haiti for the Latin American region. I would also like to congratulate Ms. Sandra Honoré on her appointment as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and to wish her every success in her work.

We have recently seen signs of stabilization in Haiti, and the country's authorities have made significant efforts, including in implementing the Government's programmes for improving jobs, education, the environment, energy and the rule of law, as well as with projects for improving the country's investment climate. We welcome the efforts of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to guarantee security and provide assistance in the country's reconstruction, in accordance with its mandate as laid

down by the Security Council. It would be difficult to overestimate the Mission's long-term contribution to improving the situation in Haiti. That said, in principle we support the Secretary-General's proposal for the need to gradually draw down MINUSTAH. At the same time, any reconfiguration must be approached carefully, as reaffirmed by the Secretary-General in his most recent report (S/2013/493), with regard to the real possibility of new security risks developing during the electoral period. That must be taken into account.

In discussing the possible reconfiguration of the Mission we must be primarily guided by the actual situation in the country. It is unfortunate that the political process in Haiti remains unsustainable and that the ongoing high level of political rhetoric has prevented the resolution of the conflicts between the executive branch and the Parliament. The holding of partial senatorial and local elections by the end of the year remains an ongoing question, therefore a matter of continuing concern. My delegation hopes that the Government will continue its effort to establish a national dialogue and to hold elections this year.

One of MINUSTAH's most important tasks is to train the Haitian National Police. We are satisfied that the effort is moving forward according to plan and that the crime situation is gradually improving.

MINUSTAH must continue to provide support to Haiti to improve governance and respect for the rule of law, with the aim of Haiti's national forces finally guaranteeing the country's security.

The socioeconomic and humanitarian situation remains challenging. In that regard, the increased active engagement of United Nations agencies, programmes and peacekeeping architecture and coordination among donors aimed at rebuilding the country is important.

It is of concern that, despite broad international effort, cholera has not yet been eradicated and the number of cases remains high. In that respect, we note MINUSTAH's effort to combat the illness.

My country fully supports the proposals of the Secretary-General to consolidate the Mission and its transformation into a smaller mission with a narrower mandate. In that context, we await with interest his ideas in his next report.

Nevertheless, such a proposal must be approached only in the presence of sufficiently stable country conditions. To achieve that, all conflict among the national authorities must cease. The establishment of viable and fully staffed Government and national security entities must be completed and the situation of internally displaced persons, and the humanitarian situation in general, must be markedly improved.

The current situation in the country demonstrates that the Haitian authorities and the international community, led by the United Nations, still face many complex tasks. A leading role in addressing those tasks must be played by the Government of Haiti, which bears the responsibility to use the international community's assistance effectively and to participate in coordinating the assistance.

Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon (Republic of Korea): At the outset, let me join the others in welcoming to the Council Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General. I thank Ms. Honoré for her comprehensive briefing.

First, it is encouraging to note that the overall security situation in Haiti has steadily improved. Stability, although fragile, has gradually taken root in Haitian society, thanks to the resilient efforts of the Haitian people themselves and the dedication of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Notably important progress has been made in police capacity-building. Its performance has been improved and training of the Haitian National Police has proceeded as planned. While international support is still needed to ensure the successful completion of the important task of police capacity-building, we believe that the recent developments provided fresh impetus to the Mission to move forward in its conditions-based consolidation plan.

On the political process, however, my delegation is deeply concerned over the ongoing political stalemate, including continuing delays in senatorial, municipal and local elections. Particularly, further delay in senatorial elections threatens dysfunction of the Senate and, by extension, the National Assembly, thereby creating an institutional vacuum in the legislative branch. Such a setback could not only erode confidence in the political system, but could undermine the valuable progress achieved so far. It is something we cannot afford.

We once again urge that fair, inclusive and transparent elections be held before the end of the year. To that end, we hope that political leaders will demonstrate their firm determination to reach the

necessary agreement and compromise as soon as possible.

Continued attention is needed in terms of the humanitarian situation in Haiti. While the establishment of the interministerial commission on human rights was a positive step forward, the situation on the ground has not kept pace with expectations. Sexual violence and gender-based crimes persist. Perpetrators often go unpunished.

Even more disturbing is the fact that more than half of the crimes committed against minors relate to sexual violence. We raise an urgent call for a strengthened police and judicial response to sexual violence. In that regard, we express our strong support for MINUSTAH's efforts to raise awareness on those issues through workshops and police training programmes.

Finally, on MINUSTAH, it should be noted that the political landscape surrounding MINUSTAH has evolved since the Mission was deployed, in 2004. The recent developments, such as police capacity improvement, an improved security situation and overall stability, demand the reconfiguration of MINUSTAH in its nature and scope.

In that regard, we appreciate that MINUSTAH's consolidation plan has proceeded without disruption or setback. We support the recommendation of the Secretary-General for a 15 per cent reduction in the Mission's uniformed strength. However, we believe that the adjustment process should proceed with great prudence and in response to developments on the ground. We also support the extension of the Mission's mandate for another year.

In conclusion, we appreciate the dynamism provided by the Special Representative to the Mission during this crucial period. We assure the Special Representative of our strong support in undertaking her important responsibilities.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to the Argentine delegation for organizing this debate on a topic of such importance to our region. We value your personal participation in the meeting, Mr. President. We also appreciate the presence of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ambassador Sandra Honoré. We wish her every success in her endeavour and have no doubt that she will continue the excellent performance of her predecessors. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2013/493), which forms the basis of today's debate. And we extend a warm welcome to our new colleagues, namely, Ambassador Denis Regis of Haiti and Ambassador Liu Jieyi of China.

In the current phase of evolution of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), we find encouraging indicators, as well as risks that could destabilize the real, but fragile, progress made in Haiti. That is why, in order to maintain the positive momentum, Haiti must continue occupying a privileged place on the international agenda, including that of the Council.

More specifically, I would like to first refer to the holding of local, municipal and legislative elections. On 28 January, the Council underscored the importance of Haiti holding elections before the end of the year. Meeting that commitment in a timely manner is of fundamental importance for both the democratization process and stabilization process, both of which are central elements in MINUSTAH's mandate.

Although some steps have been taken towards holding the elections, including that taken yesterday by President Martelly by submitting a draft electoral law to Parliament, those measures appear to be insufficient. There is a delay of almost 18 months, and we still do not have a precise timeline on the horizon. That is extremely worrying, since it relates to fundamental aspects of the Haitian constitutional system. Preserving the integrity of the electoral process is crucial for the legitimacy of the Government, the future stability of Haiti and the development of Haitian society. For those reasons, we trust that the electoral framework will promptly be approved.

Secondly, we continue to believe that it is necessary to define a governance pact that will foster a climate that is conducive for transparent, democratic and participatory management of public affairs. Without an understanding among Haitians that puts a true national accord into place, it is difficult to imagine that the present political impasse can be overcome.

Thirdly, I wish to refer to the reform of the Haitian National Police (HNP), which tends to be the main criterion against which MINUSTAH's performance is measured. Maintaining the operational capacities of the HNP is certainly essential to developing the institutions necessary for strengthening the rule of law. However, the professionalization of the police force is not enough by itself. The judicial system also needs to

be strengthened. We acknowledge that some promising steps in that regard have been taken.

Fourthly, the upcoming mandate renewal is a unique opportunity to carefully consider the priorities and critical tasks of the Mission. We continue to examine the consolidation plan of MINUSTAH and reiterate that the Mission's evolution must be flexible and adapted to the realities on the ground. From the report of the Secretary General (S/2013/493), we gather that the Mission has considerable work from now until 2016, including the task of fulfilling specific targets related to the capacity of the Haitian National Police and the preparation for presidential elections. While the current consolidation plan remains in place and while we have no certainty as to the logistical requirements for the elections, we trust that any further reduction in the capacity of the forces assigned to the Mission would be based on objective criteria, and that such a reduction would be applied in a gradual and progressive manner.

Fifthly, the level of security personnel has remained relatively stable since 2004, now that the abrupt increase provoked after the earthquake has drawn down. That is an explicit acknowledgment by the Security Council that long-term stability can be achieved only if individual rights are protected and collective threats to more vulnerable populations are eliminated. Experience has shown us that the United Nations must maintain an adequate level of presence in Haiti, both through MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team. Our withdrawal from the country must therefore be responsible to ensure that, when that time comes, the Mission will never have to return.

At the same time, it should be recalled that the crux of the instability problems facing Haiti does not have a military solution alone. We must seek out the root causes of instability, poverty, unemployment and social inequality. For that reason, we believe that the socioeconomic dimension cannot be overlooked. The Government of Haiti, both the executive and the legislative branches, as well as the international community, must all demonstrate that they have the political will and ability to combat extreme poverty and to improve the socioeconomic conditions prevailing in Haiti.

As we can observe, the architecture of the international support has changed. It now reflects the transition from a crisis phase to that of fashioning the institutional mechanisms that allow for the assistance provided for development to be adapted to Haiti's national priorities. In the humanitarian context, it is correct to acknowledge that, after long delays, today almost 82 per cent of the 1.5 million persons displaced after the earthquake have returned to their homes or have been relocated. The situation of those displaced by the catastrophe three years ago needs to be regularized. With the oncoming hurricane season, the situation is of particular importance and we need to support the 2013 humanitarian action plan.

Now and in the future, we face challenges in the maintenance of peace and security in Haiti in order to guarantee the continuity of an irreversible stabilization process. Guatemala is honoured to have been part of MINUSTAH since its inception. We will remain committed to both Haiti and to the United Nations peacekeeping operation as long as it is deemed necessary. We hope that by acting jointly we can give back to Haiti the future that Haitians deserve.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes the Defence Minister of Argentina, Mr. Rossi, to the Council to preside over today's meeting. I thank you, Sir, and other colleagues for the words of welcome extended to me. I look forward to close cooperation with all colleagues in the future in our joint efforts to advance the work of the Security Council. China also thanks Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré for her briefing on the situation in Haiti.

The Haitian situation has continued to register good progress. The Government has been making vigorous efforts in implementing policies on employment, education, the environment, energy and the rule of law, as well as in enhancing its capacity-building. Remarkable progress has been achieved in reconstruction after the 2010 earthquake. China welcomes those developments.

At the same time Haiti still faces challenges in its political process, economic development and the humanitarian situation. Peaceful reconstruction remains an arduous task that requires the continuing support and assistance of the international community. I would like to focus on the following three points.

First, I should like to refer to the continuation of the consolidation of a democratic stabilization process in Haiti. We hope that all the relevant Haitian parties will put the interests of the nation and the people first, enhance their dialogue and political consultations, achieve proper solutions of disputes, promptly reach consensus on senatorial and local Government elections

and further promote the Haitian democratic process and political reconciliation.

Secondly, MINUSTAH should to continue to advance the economic development and reconstruction of Haiti. We call on the international community to effectively honour its pledges of aid to Haiti and be constructively engaged in the country's national reconstruction.

The cholera situation in Haiti remains grim. China supports the Secretary-General's initiative, announced in February, to eradicate cholera in the country. We call on Member States to continue to provide resources and technical support in that regard.

Thirdly, MINUSTAH should continue to play the important role of the United Nations in Haiti. China appreciates the efforts and contributions by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Honoré and MINUSTAH for the maintenance of peace and stability in Haiti. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation on a continued reconfiguration of MINUSTAH and the extension of its mandate for an additional year.

China hopes that MINUSTAH will continue to implement Security Council mandates, help maintain security and stability in Haiti, promote the political process and strengthen the rule of law and the capacity-building of Government institutions. In that reconfiguration process, MINUSTAH would be well advised to extensively heed the views of all sides and proceed in a steady manner.

Ms. Le Fraper du Hellen (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Honoré, for her statement. The Argentine Minister of Defence's presence in the Council shows the importance that the Argentine presidency attaches to the issue of Haiti.

France would like to associate itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union, as well as the statement to be made by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti. I shall focus my statement on two topics, which are at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), namely, the preparations for the elections and the reform of the Haitian National Police.

We are of course concerned by the cumulative delays in the organization of the electoral process, and we welcome the establishment, on 19 April, of the transitional College of the Permanent Electoral Council. We regret that this measure, which was expected since the end of last year, has remained for such a long time without any further action due to a lack of an electoral law and constructive political dialogue. Democracy is fuelled by elections, and those elections, under the terms of the press statement that the Security Council adopted on 28 January, must be free, inclusive and credible. The elections must also be carried out in line with an electoral time line that is clear and stable. The regularity of elections of course is a sign of the health of a democracy. Partial legislative and local elections have been delayed for too long, while other deadlines are soon approaching. It is therefore essential that the elections are held immediately.

We note with appreciation the information provided by the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the Haitian National Police. The reduction in certain criminal acts and the presence of the police on an increasingly larger territory in Haiti can be taken as positive signs. We also note the quality of cooperation between the Haitian National Police force and the police component of MINUSTAH. We noted, and I think it is very encouraging, that there is a lack of increase in violence in departments where the military component of MINUSTAH has withdrawn. Of course, much remains to be done.

The national development plan for the Haitian National Police foresees an increase from 10,000 to 15,000 officers by 2016, while the report of the Secretary-General underscores the difficulties that jeopardize the achievement of the goals of that plan. MINUSTAH must therefore remain committed in the collective effort to contribute to maintaining public order, but also contribute to the national ownership of the major instrument of the rule of law that a professional police force represents.

With regard to the rule of law, we welcome the signing of the decree that created the interministerial commission on human rights in Haiti, on 13 May. However, we remain as troubled others are by the persistent elements that call into question the independence and effective functioning of the justice system. In the area of human rights, we encourage the Haitian Government and MINUSTAH to integrate the advice and assistance supplied by the independent expert appointed by the Human Rights Council.

We support the commitment of the United Nations and the personal efforts of the Secretary-General to assist Haiti in eradicating cholera. We consider it to be an attainable goal, and we encourage as a priority targeted interventions to be taken at active infection sites, as well as better coordination between epidemiological services and field activities. It is also necessary to pursue a sustainable policy for access to water and sanitation.

The consolidation of MINUSTAH continues according to the plan agreed by the international community and the Haitian Government. The Mission should continue to adapt to the evolving situation, both in scope and in quality. We favourably welcome the recommendation of the Secretary-General to renew the mandate of the Mission, while pursuing its reduction by 15 per cent through a reduction of the military personnel, specifically the engineering contingents, in order to enable the development of a local entrepreneurial fabric. We also urge — and this is a phrase that the Council has often heard in this debate — the preservation of the capacity of the Blue Helmets to communicate with the population in French.

Finally, we note with satisfaction the prospect that was suggested by the Secretary-General to undertake important consideration of the post-2016 period. The transformation of MINUSTAH must not be taboo; its possibility should be a catalyst. We must create the conditions for its success in the framework of a credible time line. And we must consider the presence of the United Nations after that deadline.

I would like to conclude by again commending the staff of MINUSTAH for their dedication and the Special Representative for her dynamic action in the Mission's transitional period. I would also like to pay tribute to Mr. Nigel Fisher for the work that he carried out as interim Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Argentina.

On behalf of the Government of Argentina, I wish to welcome the appointment of Ambassador Sandra Honoré, while also highlighting the fact that she is the first woman to be appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

I again reaffirm the commitment and the firm will of Argentina to support the people of Haiti. The cooperation of our country has always adapted to the needs stated by the Government of Haiti and the real challenges on the ground in that country. The presence of Argentina is characterized by strong emphasis on the consolidation of Haitian institutions, respect for human rights and the people's full enjoyment of democracy. That commitment is based on several pillars, but essentially on a vision of South-South cooperation through a considerable effort in human and financial terms in more than 200 projects, which are not based on assistance and which have as a central focus the development of capacity among Haitians themselves. It is only in that way that we can ensure true sustainability to support the development of our brother country.

In that context, we mention as an example the market garden programme Pro Huerta, which has meant investment in technical assessment and agricultural supplies, both of which essentially make it possible for Haitians to generate their own productive capacity. That does not mean that we are neglecting essential emergency needs. We have demonstrated that in actions such as support for the national programme for school canteens, in response to the specific needs of Haitian authorities for food donations, while at the same time cooperating with the project itself.

Argentina's commitment is also reflected in the broader context of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which has resolved to continue making efforts to cooperate with the Government of Haiti. I wish to highlight the activities of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which committed funds to rehabilitate the public hospital in Corail, in the southernmost area of Haiti. That hospital bears the name of President Néstor Kirchner, the first Secretary-General of UNASUR. Measuring more than 1,200 square metres, it was inaugurated in June 2013. Together with coordination efforts for health care between the Governments of Cuba, Venezuela and Haiti, this initiative resulted in the repair and expansion of the community hospital. We believe that it is essential to respond to the social and economic development needs of the Haitian people and to strengthen institutions in that country.

We note with satisfaction, therefore, new signs of progress in Haiti, thanks to the efforts of its Government, international assistance and the United

Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, in particular the establishment of the transitional Electoral Council. The decision taken yesterday by the President of Haiti to send to the legislature an electoral time line was auspicious. We are convinced that, with functioning institutions that can ensure democracy, Haiti's problems would be resolved faster. There should be no reduction in the number of democratic institutions for the Haitian people.

A reduction in the number of displaced people living in camps, after the relocation of more than 34,000 people, has brought about an 82 per cent decline in internally displaced persons between 2010 and 2013. However, we are concerned about the decline in international assistance and lapses in basic services, especially drinking water, which is crucial in order to overcome the spread of cholera.

On efforts by the Haitian Government to promote development and institutional stability, especially the "five Es" programme, we would like to point to the establishment of institutions linked to the rule of law, especially programmes to strengthen justice, municipal administration and civic participation. I would like also to highlight positive developments in the judiciary with reference to several long-standing cases of severe violations of human rights.

There has been progress in the strategic development plan in accordance with the priorities for economic and social development established by the Government of the Republic of Haiti. Haiti has also played a remarkable role as the temporary chair of the Caribbean Community and Common Market.

We appeal for the continued efforts of Haitian political actors to reach consensus, which could lead to the long-postponed elections, thereby overcoming the political impasse.

During this period, the security situation has shown relative stability, with some clear indications of a drop in crime rates. From that point of view, we can highlight that MINUSTAH has reached its objective of creating a secure and stable environment, but it remains to be seen if that will be sustainable.

The Haitian National Police has shown significant progress, both in the number and training of cadets. We applaud the fact that, by November, the Haitian police force will be over 11,200 strong. However, we stress the need to be cautious when subcontracting civilian personnel to fulfil security roles. In such cases, the responsibility of ensuring competence always lies with the State. As a result, the efforts of countries that are members of the Mission should from now on be focused on specific actions aimed at developing a training programme for Haitian security forces, thereby strengthening the Haitian National Police, which is key when it comes to the process of genuinely reducing the number of personnel in MINUSTAH. A gradual and orderly transfer of the responsibility for ensuring security to the Haitian authorities must be achieved.

Continuing with the current trend of progress in security and gradually strengthening the capacity of the Haitian National Police are complex variables on which compliance with the guidelines established by the Mission consolidation plan depend to a great degree. If the conditions of those two variables are not met, we run the risk of a vicious cycle, which could extend the presence of MINUSTAH, with a further risk of the situation deteriorating.

Argentina supports the continued presence of MINUSTAH, as long as it is required by local authorities and is justified by the prevailing security situation and the requirements for reconstruction. For that reason, we wish to highlight that our country supports the Mission consolidation plan for 2013-2016, and we share the objectives to reduce MINUSTAH forces in accordance with the proposal in the plan, based on improvements in capacity-building among the police, the development of electoral capacity, the rule of law, human rights and good governance. In that sense, we understand that all missions need to have time tables and dates, but a day on a calendar does not always represent the whole day. A day on a calendar is just a number on the calendar. Bearing in mind that it might be cloudy, or there are chances of storms or rain, let such days serve as a warning. The forecast for the day might be rain, showers or even storms, but that forecast might also be sunny, with clear skies. We believe and are convinced that MINUSTAH should not only set a date but also a forecast and that forecast should be one when the sun starts coming out for the entire people of Haiti, a sun that represents hope, ensures sustainable development, harmonious development with respect for institutions, economic development and the full and legitimate enjoyment of democracy.

Beyond our bilateral commitment towards Haiti and the efforts Argentina is promoting through regional organizations such as UNASUR, I wish to remind everyone that our commitment is also demonstrated

by the presence of more than 572 personnel, 38 of whom are women. Since 2004, when MINUSTAH was established, Argentina, through its armed forces, has mobilized more than 12,000 personnel who have been present in various contingents within Haiti. In that military component, we wish to highlight the existence of the field hospital, which is a resource for health care and hospital assistance for the entire United Nations contingent, and highly valued by the entire mission.

Lastly, I wish to conclude by highlighting Argentina's interest in continuing to participate in the efforts of the international community in the interest of peace and security. In that context, I wish to highlight a particular commitment we naturally have in our region of Latin America and the Caribbean. For us, Haiti is part of our region. My presence here today is intended to demonstrate the special interest we, as Argentina, have in the region, with all of our mechanisms of integration. I hope that Haiti will find its path as an autonomous nation, one in which it can deploy its full potential. We are doubly committed to the United Nations through the Security Council because of what the Stabilization Mission means, and we are also committed as Latin American brethren.

To conclude, I wish to briefly refer to something I believe is important when it comes to the spirit that should guide us through this mission in Haiti.

Fifty years ago today, not far from here, in Washington, D.C., on 28 August 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr., gave that memorable speech where he spoke about his dream. "I have a dream" are the words he used. To conclude, I would like to read a very short part of that speech.

> "I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Regis (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I would like, first of all, to extend my warmest congratulations, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Haiti, to the Ambassador of Argentina, Her Excellency Mrs. María Cristina Perceval, who is presiding over the Security Council for the month of August. I would like to reiterate the profound gratitude of the authorities of my country and myself for taking the initiative to convene today's debate on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) on the eve of the expiration of its mandate, as provided for in resolution 2070 (2012), of 12 October 2012. My Government expresses its sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for his balanced and detailed report (S/2013/493), which touches upon many aspects of the political, economic, financial, health and security situation in Haiti. The Haitian Government supports the observations and recommendations contained in the report, in particular the extension of MINUSTAH's mandate for another year.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for the high quality of her briefing and the relevance of her comments. I extend to her my best wishes for success as she takes on her mission in Haiti.

The Haitian delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the members of the Security Council whose comments and expressed concerns strongly coincide with the views and concerns of President Michel Joseph Martelly, Prime Minister Laurent Salvador Lamothe and the entire Government. I would also like to thank the members of the Security Council for their moderation, their reserve and the sense of proportion that they have shown in assessing the facts and events in my country.

I have the privilege today to make the following comments before the Security Council, which is playing such an essential and indispensable role in the future of our world, and before Ambassadors who embody the mind to such a high degree and who contribute unceasingly and with talent to the standing of the Organization and the pursuit of its noble objectives.

The Republic of Haiti, as is well known, is experiencing a very particular time which is undoubtedly decisive in its history. It seeks to strengthen its democratic institutions, while working relentlessly after so many lost decades to re-establish growth and finally commit to a path where the economy takes off and development is sustainable. Directly in line with its efforts to strengthen and see to the good functioning of the Republic's institutions, the President solemnly invited, on 14 August, the transitional College of the Permanent Electoral Council to take all necessary

measures in order to organize partial senatorial and local elections no later than December 2013. Yesterday, Tuesday, the executive power, through the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, submitted the draft electoral law governing the elections to the Chamber of Deputies.

Over the past two years, significant advances and notable and indisputable progress, underscored almost unanimously by observers in good faith and by the Secretary-General in his report, have been made in all areas — institutional, socioeconomic, cultural and security. However, the task is immense, the challenges are great and the obstacles are formidable. That is why we attach a particular value to understanding, solidarity and cooperation with the international community, and primarily the United Nations.

In addition, while welcoming the fact that Haiti, in the view of the Security Council, no longer constitutes a threat or a danger to international peace and security in the region, we believe that it is necessary to launch and deepen consideration of the post-MINUSTAH period with responsible partners through discussions that are calm and without preconceptions. As has been emphasized in the Secretary-General's report, voices are being raised in the country to call into question the presence of MINUSTAH. It would be desirable that all possible scenarios for disengagement be considered in order to avoid a repetition of history.

The historic and unique ties that exist between Haiti and the United Nations are more relevant than ever. Haiti is an original member of the Organization which, from the very first cooperation mission of the Economic and Social Council pursuant to resolution 51 (IV), of 26 March 1947, has brought unceasing support to us in our development efforts. In that regard, Haiti can be proud to have a special and unique relationship with the United Nations. The time has therefore come to work to expand and redefine, as is clearly necessary, that cooperation, which of course has proven itself, so that it can be given a new impetus and a new dynamism and so that it can be better able to meet the needs of the times and more coherent with respect to national priorities. In that regard, I am certain that I can count on the nobility of the Council's views and its attachment to the Republic of Haiti, whose stability, development and progress it has always particularly valued.

I would like to convey to the Council the willingness of the Haitian Government, in solidarity with the ideals, principles and objectives defined by the Charter of the United Nations, to work tirelessly with the Council for international peace and security, development and the promotion and protection of human rights and political, economic, social and cultural rights. In that regard, in addition to ongoing efforts in the country to build the rule of law, which is inseparable from promoting respect for differences despite disagreements, the Government of Haiti has reached a new milestone in its commitment to the pre-eminent dignity of the human person. On 16 August, here at the United Nations, Haiti signed the 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1984.

In that spirit, the Government of Haiti will continue to support the efforts of the Organization and the personal efforts of its representatives and staff to promote human rights in all their dimensions, which is a very real exercise in universal solidarity, tolerance and respect for cultural identities. These are all values that have never been more relevant to and necessary for the building of a national and international order that is more just, more human and more fraternal, an order to which humankind has aspired since 1945.

I welcome the report of the Secretary-General, which is balanced and, overall, in line with the previous report (S/2013/139). It reports the facts, highlights the efforts of the Haitian authorities to strengthen political, economic and security governance and lists the existing limits and shortcomings in terms of what remains to be done. I reiterate, on behalf of my country and its Government, my faith in the many United Nations initiatives, both in Haiti and elsewhere, to resolve and overcome conflict, reduce poverty, promote development and bring people together.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, which includes Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Guatemala, Peru, the United States and my country, Uruguay. I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President and Minister of Defence of the Argentine Republic, and your delegation for holding this debate to discuss the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/493) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The Group of Friends welcomes the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and thanks her for her comprehensive briefing and her intensive work during her few first months in Haiti.

The Group of Friends notes the progress achieved in Haiti since the previous reporting period in key areas for Haiti's development such as employment, education, the environment, energy and the rule of law, which are the Government's five policy priorities, known as the "five Es".

The Group also notes with satisfaction that, during the reporting period, the levels of civil unrest and major crimes, in particular homicides and kidnappings, have decreased. The significant decrease in the number of people displaced by the 2010 earthquake is another encouraging trend. However, the Group would like to underscore the fact that Haiti continues to face significant humanitarian challenges, especially with respect to women and children, with over 279,000 internally displaced persons still dependent on humanitarian assistance for their basic survival and extremely vulnerable to natural disasters.

The ongoing cholera epidemic is a major concern for the Group of Friends. In that regard, we highlight the importance of redoubling the efforts by the United Nations and the broader international community to assist the Haitian Government in preventing and treating the disease and to achieve crucial structural improvements in Haiti's water and sanitation sector. To that end, it is urgent and critical to fund the national plan for the elimination of cholera in a sustainable manner and to seize any opportunity to reduce the threat posed by that disease by means of targeted actions.

On the political front, the Group of Friends notes the establishment of the transitional Electoral Council, an important step towards the holding of the long-overdue partial legislative, municipal and local elections. The Group notes, however, that preparations for the elections are still experiencing significant delays, including the pending approval of the electoral law. The Group calls on the Haitian Government and all the relevant stakeholders to redouble their efforts to allow those elections to take place in 2013 in a transparent, fair and credible manner, which will strengthen democratic institutions.

With regard tp the differing interpretations of when the term of the second of the three groups of senators will expire, it is important that all political stakeholders in Haiti work cooperatively and constructively towards a resolution of that matter.

The Group of Friends notes that the overall security situation in Haiti remained relatively stable during the reporting period. That has allowed MINUSTAH to continue its drawdown in accordance with its conditions-based consolidation plan without undermining the security and stability of Haiti.

The Group of Friends of Haiti recognizes MINUSTAH's critical role in ensuring stability and security in Haiti and commends MINUSTAH for continuing to assist the Government of Haiti in ensuring a secure and stable environment.

The Group of Friends notes the commitment by the Government of Haiti to strengthen the rule of law and to make further progress in security sector reform. In that respect, the Group would like to highlight the critical role of the Haitian National Police (HNP) in Haiti's security and stability, and to stress the importance of completing the ongoing strengthening, professionalization and reform of the Haitian National Police so that it can assume full responsibility for Haiti's security. In that regard, the Group notes the progress made in the implementation of the five-year Haitian National Police development plan 2012-2016 and reiterates the importance of maintaining support for the plan.

The Group of Friends of Haiti believes that security, development and stability are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing. We therefore underscore the need to address the issues of unemployment, education, the delivery of basic social services and ensuring women's economic and political empowerment. At the same time, the Group stresses that there can be no genuine stability or sustainable development in Haiti without strengthening democratic institutions and a credible democratic process. In that context, the Group emphasizes the importance of promoting the rule of law by strengthening Haitian institutions, including an independent judiciary, and reaffirms MINUSTAH's responsibility for supporting the Haitian State in the areas of democratic governance, the expansion of the State's authority and the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with its mandate.

The Group of Friends of Haiti reiterates the importance of respecting the zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse. It expects all

United Nations personnel to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and urges all the actors involved to make every effort and to shoulder their responsibilities in order to prevent cases of misconduct, investigate allegations and hold those responsible to account.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the Group of Friends will exhaustively consider the recommendations in the report in the next few days with the aim of making a substantive and constructive contribution to the discussions in the Security Council on MINUSTAH's mandate, so that the Mission can continue to discharge its responsibilities and consolidate its presence. The Group of Friends of Haiti would like to express its support and gratitude to the women and men of MINUSTAH for their dedication and tireless efforts in supporting the goals of recovery and stability in Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): It is an honour to have His Excellency Mr. Agustín Rossi, Minister of Defence of the Argentine Republic, presiding over today's debate on a matter that is so important to our region and our countries. I would also like to welcome Special Representative Sandra Honoré and thank her for her presentation. Brazil would like to reiterate its wishes for her success in all her endeavours. And I appreciate the contribution of the Permanent Representative of Haiti, Ambassador Regis.

Today Haiti has an opportunity to consolidate stability, to continue to pursue a number of initiatives aimed at creating jobs, generating income and promoting investment, and to strengthen its institutions. Its efforts to establish an enhanced platform for coordinating international cooperation, to allocate budgetary resources to cover part of the costs of pending elections, as well as its social programmes aimed at combating poverty, are promising indications, among others, of significant progress. We encourage our Haitian partners to continue on that path towards development with social justice.

We also reiterate our call to all friends of Haiti to commit the resources necessary to help Haiti invest in key development projects, including infrastructure. Brazil is doing its part. We continue to cooperate with the Haitian authorities in searching for partners willing to complement the $40 million we have provided for the construction of the Artibonite hydropower plant, which would truly help to transform the country. Unfortunately, not enough support from Governments and international financial organizations has been secured so far.

Development is not a purely economic concept. It is also a political one, since development both benefits from and strengthens democracy. In the case of Haiti today, it is of paramount importance that all political actors and parties engage constructively in a genuine political dialogue in order to uphold democratic consolidation, institution-building, national ownership, human rights and the rule of law. Consolidating democracy in Haiti is as crucial to its future as are investment and infrastructure, agriculture and industry, health and education.

The Security Council has called for pending legislative and local elections to be held this year. Brazil hopes that elections can be conducted as soon as possible; otherwise Haiti runs the risk of having its Parliament reduced to only a third of the current number of seats, which could severely impair the political role of the legislative branch, breaking the functional symmetry of the three branches of Government. We are confident that concrete steps are being taken in that direction and urge all Haitian political actors to promote inclusive dialogue to expedite the preparations. President Martelly's leadership is key to the process. Brazil stands ready to support the democratic process in Haiti and has already delivered on its pledge for support for the upcoming electoral cycle.

Progress in the security situation continues to be the main pillar of the consolidation plan of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We welcome the enhanced recruitment to the Haitian National Police, the ongoing vetting process and the increased joint operations between the Haitian National Police and MINUSTAH. It is crucial that the Haitian National Police absorb best practices and lessons from MINUSTAH's experience and benefit from the Mission's ability to provide conditions adequate to a successful handover of security responsibilities in critical areas.

We concur with the gradual, carefully planned reduction of troop levels proposed by the Secretary-General, attuned to the realities on the ground. The Secretary-General is also right about the need to assess, beyond the 2016 horizon, whether MINUSTAH remains the most suitable configuration for the United Nations presence in Haiti. Ensuring a balanced and holistic consolidation strategy for MINUSTAH is

critical to Haiti's long-term stability. As the Mission reduces its military footprint, development assistance, from both the United Nations and other actors, should be scaled up. It is crucial to underline that need at this juncture in the life of MINUSTAH because very often as troops depart, development and humanitarian actors and resources follow suit. We must not repeat that grave error in Haiti. A future United Nations presence in Haiti should be able to reverse that trend and should be based on the broad consensus being developed in the Council on the relationships between security and development, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and sustainable peace and sound transitions, as set out in resolution 2086 (2013).

MINUSTAH's experience has demonstrated the potential of innovative approaches when combined with the well-established structure of a multidimensional peacekeeping operation. Tools such as quick-impact projects and military engineers play a crucial role in supporting core stabilization objectives. In that regard, we welcome the broadened scope for community violence reduction projects in support of initiatives promoting the rule of law in Haiti. The successful experience of legal aid offices supported through community violence reduction projects in Haiti, which are responsible for freeing hundreds from pre-trial detention, demonstrates the wide-ranging potential of such programmes, including from a human rights perspective. We hope that all of those experiences and best practices, rather than short-term financial considerations, will form the basis of our evaluation of future options next year.

The contribution of the United Nations in Haiti and that of the international community will be judged by its legacy. We remain committed to the objective of ensuring that the stability gains secured so far are sustainable. In other words, we must get this transition right. A close working relationship between the Mission and its counterparts in the Government is key to avoiding substantial gaps in critical areas, especially in security. As we have stated in the past, the consolidation plan must be owned by the Haitian leadership as a platform for taking over their primary responsibilities in a sustainable manner.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Brazil's long-term commitment and solidarity with Haiti, and also our confidence in the Haitian people's determination to persevere and succeed in their quest for independence, stability, democracy and prosperity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Montaño (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his report on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) (S/2013/493) and his recommendation that the international community continue to support to that fraternal country. I also appreciate the briefing by Ms. Sandra Honoré on the situation on the ground in Haiti, which is clearly of great importance to the Council.

As the report indicates, the situation in Haiti has made encouraging progress in the area of security and strengthening the rule of law. It is clear that MINUSTAH has played a key role in achieving that progress. In close coordination with the Government, the Mission has supported the institution-building of the Haitian National Police, in order that it may eventually ensure security in the country. The Mission also has promoted projects to assist stabilization, dealing with important matters such as the protection of vulnerable groups, community violence reduction and the prevention of gender-based violence.

Mexico recognizes the will of the Haitian Government to make progress in those fundamental areas in order to strengthen democracy and to lay a firm foundation to foster economic development and improve the situation of those who remain in the camps for internally displaced persons.

It is necessary to redouble efforts in order that those initiatives may produce tangible dividends for Haitian society. In that sense, there is concern that a possible postponement of partial elections could produce and exacerbate political tensions and hinder further progress on priority issues.

It is clear that MINUSTAH and the international community are prepared to support the electoral process and the priority initiatives defined by Haiti's legislative authorities, who have the final word in such matters.

I note that Mexico provides support to Haiti through its electoral institutions, which help to strengthen institutions and professionalize and enhance the country's electoral system. On 4 July, Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute and Electoral Tribunal signed a cooperation agreement with Haiti's permanent Electoral Council concerning electoral systems, voter registration, organization and logistics,

the development of democratic political culture and electoral voter education — which are all essential.

Along with the United Nations involvement in promoting the democratic process, my delegation emphasizes and reiterates the importance of the relevance and presence of the Organization in Haiti in promoting economic recovery strategies and medium — and long-term projects to meet ongoing needs in terms of humanitarian assistance, health, food security and infrastructure.

In that regard, we support continuation of quick-impact projects as well as the involvement of MINUSTAH and the country team in vital areas such as education, food and agriculture, which, if not addressed, can lead to instability in the long run.

The report of the Secretary-General indicates progress in implementing MINUSTAH's consolidation plan for 2013-2016, and suggests further reconfiguration of the Mission, in view of a possible transition to a different United Nations presence in Haiti. For the transition to be successful, such evaluation must be supported by both the institutional factors reflected in the proposed indicators, as well as the actual conditions prevailing on the ground. It is important not to neglect unpredictable factors such as natural disasters, which can trigger a loss of life and infrastructure, with attendant social, political and economic consequences.

We also wish to emphasize the intrinsic link between development, security and human rights as a fundamental element in implementing measures to ensure the restoration of stability and harmony in the country.

Mexico considers essential the sustained presence of MINUSTAH to consolidate the progress made and to continue to support the Haitian Government in addressing pending challenges. In that regard, the Mexican Government reiterates its full support to the Haitian Government.

Mexico reiterates its full support for the Mission and highlights the contributions of its men and women to improve the situation in Haiti.

My delegation also highlights the efforts of the Haitian Government and reaffirms its strong commitment to strengthening its institutions through medium and long-term projects.

We hope that the Mission's consolidation plan will result in a successful transition process leading to the eventual departure of MINUSTAH, once we have reached the goals of stability and development in Haiti and achieved the long-term goals.

The challenges of the immediate future are arduous; only international solidarity will help to overcome them. We reiterate our commitment to that end so that the efforts of the Organization and, above all, those made by the Haitian people over decades, will be rewarded by democratic stability and the country's long-awaited development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vrailas (*spoke in French*): I speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries of Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates; as well as Ukraine and Armenia, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, let me first commend the outgoing interim Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Nigel Fisher, and thank him for his excellent cooperation with the European Union and its member States throughout the various positions that he has held in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Honoré on her appointment as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSTAH, and to wish her every success in carrying out her mandate.

The European Union shares the analysis of the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/493) concerning the political situation in Haiti. While we can recognize a relative stabilization of the political context in the past 12 months, the situation nevertheless remains fragile and is characterized by an uncooperative attitude among the various institutional sectors, while the enormous challenges Haiti still faces require a broad national consensus.

The European Union fully shares the concerns of the Secretary-General regarding the significant delays that have accumulated in the electoral process vis-à-vis the possibility of holding the next elections before the end of 2013. The consolidation of democracy and the rule of law in Haiti, as well as progress in the process of reconstruction and economic recovery, require

strong democratic institutions that are able to operate according to the constitutional rules.

The European Union encourages regularly in its high-level political contacts with all parties concerned to adopt a cooperative and responsible approach. It is essential that the institutions concerned accelerate the legislative and preparatory work to allow the elections to be held as soon as possible. For its part, the European Union contributes €4 million to the "basket fund" managed by United Nations Development Programme to organize the upcoming elections, and it has released an additional €2 million to support the capacity-building of the future Permanent Electoral Council.

Delays in reforming the justice sector are another source of concern. In the observations contained in the conclusion of hit latest report, the Secretary-General refers, inter alia, to the need to end the prevailing climate of impunity.

The European Union welcomes the positive results achieved by MINUSTAH in several areas of its mandate, in particular with regard to advancing the programme for strengthening the Haitian National Police, significantly reducing crime as a result of increased joint patrols with the Haitian National Police, efforts to mitigate the most serious deficiencies in the penal system, and improving the capacity of interim municipal councils.

The European Union also notes progress in the implementation of the four key objectives in the fields of security, elections, the rule of law and governance, related to the gradual reconfiguration of MINUSTAH. It seems essential that Haiti's international partners continue to coordinate their efforts to support the achievement of those objectives, with a view towards achieve the normalization of the political and security situation, as well as strengthening governance and the rule of law.

· The European Union welcomes the progressive reduction in the number of internally displaced persons still living in camps. The European Union is nevertheless particularly concerned about the fate of thousands of vulnerable families who are facing forced evictions and who have no solution for decent housing, a situation that puts them at risk of abuse. In a context where many humanitarian assistance organizations have decided to cease operations in Haiti, despite the persistence of significant need, the European Union continues to provide indispensable humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons and victims of natural disasters, while supporting resettlement in dignified and decent conditions. With its humanitarian assistance, the European Union also continues to support the fight against cholera, which has become endemic with peak periods during the rainy season.

With regard to development assistance, the European Union, together with its members States, is currently planning cooperation with Haiti for the period 2014-2020. Haiti should benefit from a volume of assistance at least equal to that of the previous period, which confirms our ongoing commitment to continue to work alongside Haiti.

Among other things, the European Union is contemplating supporting the reform programme of public Administration announced by the Prime Minister in November 2012, including aspects related to reform of the security sector. The rule of law, presented in the report of the Secretary-General as fundamental to the advancement of the country, and food security, mentioned as one of the major humanitarian concerns, should also be subject of our assistance. Negotiations with the Government on the areas of intervention and our future cooperation will take place this fall.

Advances in the area of democratic institutions will not be sufficient to ensure stability and security in Haiti while the current socioeconomic conditions persist. Haiti is one of the most unequal countries in the world, and extreme poverty affects most of the population. If the data does not change, the security situation will remain highly volatile.

In conclusion, the European Union shares the recommendations of the Secretary-General for a progressive reconfiguration of MINUSTAH. However, that process must balance the momentum of the progress that seems to be taking place in Haiti and the continuing fragility of its institutions, in order to avoid the significant advances in recent years being undermined. The Haitian authorities must continue to implement reforms to consolidate security and democratic stabilization related to the progressive transfer of powers from MINUSTAH. The next test of that effort will be the holding of the electoral process that has been delayed for nearly two years. The European Union and its member States will continue to be fully committed to support the Haitian authorities in accomplishing that goal.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Umemoto (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for presiding over this important debate. I would also like to congratulate Ms. Sandra Honoré on assuming the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), and I would like to thank her for her comprehensive briefing today as well as her significant contribution to the Mission. I also pay tribute to the men and women of MINUSTAH for the commitment and fortitude they have demonstrated under difficult circumstances.

I welcome the Secretary-General's report on MINUSTAH issued on 19 August (S/2013/493). As the report mentions, we are very pleased to note that Haiti has made progress. The Government of Haiti established a transitional Electoral Council on 19 April and has been advancing President Martelly's Administration's "five Es" policy of employment, education, the environment, energy and the establishment of the rule of law. With regard to the recovery process, since the earthquake in 2010, more than 10 million cubic metres of debris, which amounts to almost 80 per cent of the total debris, has been removed. And the number of internally displaced persons has been reduced by 82 per cent, according to the Secretary-General's report.

In recognition of that change on the ground, Japan withdrew its ground Self-Defence Force's engineering unit in Haiti last December. The number of personnel who have served in the Japanese contingent since 2010 totals approximately 2,200. In that regard, Japan welcomes the MINUSTAH consolidation plan referred to in the previous report (S/2013/139)of the Secretary-General and the fact that the plan has been progressing in cooperation with the Government of Haiti.

Haiti certainly continues to face many challenges. As the Secretary-General's report points out, continued delays in the implementation of long-overdue elections and strained relations between the executive and legislative branches of the Government risk thwarting progress in the stabilization process. Japan welcomes the fact that Haiti established its transitional Electoral Council in April, but more work will be needed for the Government to carry out its next elections in a peaceful and democratic manner.

Basic infrastructure in the country remains fragile. In addition to the earthquake in 2010, Hurricane Sandy last October brought significant damage to the country. Although the international community responded right after the hurricane, Haiti still needs to improve its basic infrastructure, including roads, electricity and potable water, as well as social services, including access to education and medicine. High unemployment also remains a big concern.

To respond to those important needs, the Government of Japan has already disbursed more than $150 million, exceeding the $100 million pledged in the New York conference in 2010. Even after the withdrawal of its Ground Self-Defense Force's engineering unit, Japan intends to continue supporting and cooperating with Haiti. When the engineering unit left Haiti, Japan donated engineering equipment to the Haitian Government and contributed to human resources development in the country through the sharing of its expertise in the use of that equipment. Japan also currently supports strengthening the capacity of national authorities in the areas of debris management and the operation of engineering equipment. The Government of Japan will continue to provide support to Haiti as it restores or establishes basic social services, mainly in the fields of health, hygiene and education.

As you are aware, Mr. President, the Great East Japan Earthquake struck our country in March 2011, about a year after the significant earthquake that hit Haiti. Like Haiti, Japan is a country where natural disasters occur frequently; that is why Japan firmly intends to continue collaborating with Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Rishchynski (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I would like first to thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Argentina for having organized this debate on Haiti. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Sandra Honoré, for her briefing and to assure her of Canada's continued support to her and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Canada has shared a partnership with Haiti for decades and is one of the most generous donors to Haiti. Since 2006, Canada has provided Haiti with more than $1 billion in support to Haitian development priorities, in particular with respect to economic growth, food security and maternal and child health, through

Canada's commitments undertaken in the framework of the Group of Eight's Muskoka initiative. Canada has also provided substantial humanitarian assistance to meet the immediate needs of the Haitian population after the 2010 earthquake. In March of this year, we responded to the 2013 consolidated appeal to help provide life-saving humanitarian assistance, addressing immediate needs in emergency food assistance, health services, water provision, sanitation and cholera prevention. Meanwhile, our development assistance continues to help women and children gain access to health facilities and enjoy a better quality of life. Their well-being is essential to the successful development of key Haitian institutions. Those are the kinds of results we want to continue seeing in Haiti.

Through our stabilization and reconstruction task force, the Government of Canada has contributed to Haiti's ongoing security sector reform by focusing on increasing the capacity of the Haitian National Police (HNP). We have done so by rebuilding or refurbishing police commissariats and by providing equipment and training to HNP officers. Those contributions help empower Haitians to provide for their own needs in security.

For Canada, Haiti remains a priority in the Americas and worldwide. That is why Canada's new Minister of International Development, Mr. Christian Paradis, chose Haiti for his first official visit, thus demonstrating Canada's commitment to Haiti. Minister Paradis arrived on Monday in Port-au-Prince and leaves today, having had a number of successful and informative meetings and discussions in the country. He met with Haitian Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe and other Government officials, as well as some of the Haitian people who are benefitting from Canada's development assistance. He witnessed the impacts that natural disasters have had and the humanitarian needs that continue to challenge Haiti. He also witnessed the strength of the Haitian people and the resolve of their Government to move towards greater stability and long-term development. During his visit, Minister Paradis reiterated his wish that Haiti assume strong leadership and accountability for its own development. He also announced that Canada stood ready to support the Government of Haiti in better coordinating the non-governmental organizations, donors and partners currently operating in the country through Haiti's new development coordination mechanism.

(*spoke in English*)

Minister Paradis' visit, as well as the visit of our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. John Baird, earlier this year, reflects our interest in the future of Haiti. Those visits have also helped to inform the review we are presently conducting of our long-term engagement in Haiti. We are looking forward to completing that review so that we can maximize our investments to support accountable and sustainable results for the Haitian people, especially those most in need.

Haiti has made broad-based economic development, including through trade and investment, a top priority. Canada welcomes the spirit of those efforts and strongly encourages actions that lead to further gains in transparent governance, economic development and sustainable job creation. Initiatives in the Haitian tourism sector have shown what can be achieved when the Government and the private sector work together. Accountability, economic competitiveness and diversification are essential to achieving poverty reduction and increased revenue generation for the Government. We encourage continued action in improving the business environment, which can transform Haiti's economic potential into concrete outcomes for the Haitian people.

For Haiti to succeed on the path of development in accordance with its own objectives and plans, it is necessary to have a supportive environment and, in particular, institutional and political stability. In that context, we note with concern that the long overdue senatorial, municipal and local elections prescribed by the Constitution still have not taken place, despite repeated calls by Haitian political actors and members of the Security Council that they be held this year. Moreover, such delays significantly disrupt the normal operations of Haiti's Parliament, and therefore the country's governing institutions. It is critical for all political actors to spare no effort to carry out the elections in a free and transparent manner as soon as possible.

Entering yet another phase of political and institutional instability would undermine the development and security gains made by Haiti thus far and compromise further progress. Canada urges all political actors to work together to find the path towards a transparent and continued operation of key institutions of democratic governance and to ensure political stability. In that context, the submission by

the President of the draft electoral law to Parliament yesterday is a welcome development.

(*spoke in French*)

Canada continues to support the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and thanks MINUSTAH for its contribution and all its efforts to bring stability to Haiti. With respect to the evolution of the MINUSTAH force, it is important not to sacrifice the security gains made thus far on the security front and that the decisions taken in this area be based on the situation on the ground and the capacity of the Haitian State to guarantee security for its population.

Canada was pleased to note the progress made by the Haitian National Police in recent years as it assumes increasing responsibility for security for the Haitian people. We thank MINUSTAH for its support to Haiti's security institutions and encourage the Mission to build upon the progress achieved thus far. We also appreciate the relevant efforts of the Haitian Government and strongly urge it to continue to implement the police development plan. The rule of law and a professional and capable police force are critical for Haiti's security and its future. I can assure you, Mr. President, that Canada will continue to support Haiti in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Román-Morey (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to welcome the initiative by your presidency of the Security Council, Sir, to convene a debate on the situation in Haiti. We also welcome the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms. Sandra Honoré, and we are grateful for the briefing on the report of the Secretary General (S/2013/493) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We would like to extend a special greeting and our congratulations to the Argentine presidency of the Council and welcome your presence at this meeting in particular, Mr. Agustín Rossi, Minister of Defence of the Argentine Republic.

Peru is committed to achieving and consolidating security, stability, sustainable development and institutional strengthening in Haiti. That is why my country has actively participated in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti since 2004, with a military contingent consisting of 366 troops, including female staff in the field, and military officers among the chiefs of staff of the Mission. Peru is also a member of the Group of Friends of Haiti, the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, the Group of Friends of Haiti of the Organization of American States and the Latin American mechanism on political coordination on Haiti.

On that basis, my delegation would like to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti, in particular the recognition that the work carried out by MINUSTAH has been crucial to achieving significant progress in Haiti's stabilization and security and in terms of strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law in the country. We also believe that this work continues to be essential to providing the Haitian authorities with the security and support needed to facilitate the process of democratic consolidation.

Peru recognizes the importance of the appointment of the members of the transitional Electoral Council as an important advance towards realizing the long-postponed partial legislative, municipal and local elections. However, we are concerned that the failure to hold the elections in the short term may create a climate of political instability and a lack of governance in Haiti. Therefore, while recognizing the Haitian people's democratic aspirations and emphasizing the importance of democratic stability in the countries of our region, my delegation calls on all political forces in Haiti to reach the necessary agreements to enable the timely holding of the elections, which will strengthen the functioning of key institutions for democratic governance in Haiti.

While the security situation in Haiti remains relatively stable, owing mainly to the crucial work of MINUSTAH, we must note that there have been massive protests in Haiti, mainly related to socioeconomic problems such as food insecurity and a lack of basic services. That serves to remind us that the United Nations system should promote even greater cooperation in the three areas that have a direct impact on the ongoing process of recovery and reconstruction in Haiti, namely, governance, security and sustainable development.

In reiterating our appreciation for the work of MINUSTAH in ensuring stability and security in Haiti, we would like to express our satisfaction with the progress made in the institutionalization, professionalism and strengthening of the Haitian National Police as part of its five-year development

plan for 2012-2016. That will enable that institution to have the troops necessary to maintain public order and ensure the security of the population throughout the country. In turn, that will allow for a solid institutional framework that promotes the strengthening of the rule of law and respect for human rights.

The progress made by MINUSTAH in stabilizing Haiti over the past few years allows us to look towards the future with optimism. We therefore believe that the time is coming to start a gradual and orderly transition to a second phase of cooperation by the United Nations system on Haiti. In that respect, we welcome the plan for the reconfiguration and consolidation of MINUSTAH, which is aimed at consolidating the gains achieved thus far and laying the foundations for a long-term development plan. The plan contains useful parameters and indicators to measure the progress achieved by the Government of Haiti in areas that are crucial to safety and the institutional and democratic strengthening of the country.

My delegation believes that a future reduction in MINUSTAH staff, or even a change in the nature of the Mission, should only be decided upon after a serious evaluation of the progress made in the field in terms of the parameters and indicators set out in the MINUSTAH reconfiguration and consolidation plan. We are aware of the importance of peacekeeping missions having exit strategies in the medium term. However, we believe that such strategies should be flexible enough to reflect the realities on the ground.

In conclusion, it is my duty to stress that MINUSTAH's significant achievements to date should not give us the false impression that the work of the United Nations in Haiti is finished, or even close to it. Experience has shown the serious consequences suffered in some countries when the Organization has decided to withdraw its presence from the field too soon. We therefore call on States Members of the Organization and the entire international community to maintain their continued and ongoing support for the people and Government of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We congratulate and express our gratitude to the delegation of Argentina for having organized this debate and providing us with a new opportunity to consider the situation in Haiti, in particular through the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/493) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which we of course also welcome.

We welcome the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, Ms.Sandra Honoré, and wish her success in her work leading the assistance efforts in that Caribbean nation and helping the Haitian authorities in strengthening democracy and promoting long-term development.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

We reiterate our commitment made in February 2004 to the stabilization and peacebuilding process in Haiti and the work of MINUSTAH in favour of the security, stability, institution-building and development of Haiti and its people. In that regard, we also welcome the participation of new countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in MINUSTAH by contributing either troops or police contingents. That allows us to express our ongoing regional commitment towards Haiti.

We recognize the progress made in the security and humanitarian spheres in the period covered in the latest report of the Secretary-General. In particular, we want to stress the closure of 33 sites for displaced persons and the relocation of 34,000 Haitians. However, significant challenges remain to which the Haitian authorities must respond with the support of the international community. We also highlight the institutional progress made in some areas — for example, in the area of human rights and, specifically, with regard to the establishment of the interministerial commission on human rights. However, much remains to be done.

For my delegation, security, stability and development are interrelated elements. The latest report of the Secretary-General once again makes it clear that MINUSTAH remains essential to achieving those objectives. In that regard, the consolidation plan for MINUSTAH must be implemented bearing in mind the needs identified in the field, and with a view to the future that makes it possible to strengthen institutional capacity in Haiti under the principle of national ownership, such that the Haitian people will gradually take over the various responsibilities.

In that regard, on the understanding that the priority is to strengthen the rule of law and improve the political environment in Haiti, especially with regard to the electoral sphere, we encourage the Special

Representative of the Secretary-General to continue working so that the Haitian authorities will respond to the ongoing institutional processes through a political dialogue and social inclusion, the best path to the desired end.

On that front, we urgently call for the partial senatorial, municipal and local elections to take place in a fair, credible and transparent manner as quickly as possible. In that sense, the adoption and promotion of the draft electoral law that was submitted to Parliament yesterday seems to us to be of the greatest urgency.

The recent report of the Secretary-General notes a stable, but fragile, situation where the process of training police continues to be a priority. In that regard, while reiterating that this process must take place in a democratic framework with respect for human rights, we also highlight the efforts of MINUSTAH and local authorities to comply with the strategic development plan for the Haitian National Police, as well as the progress made in that area. Chile reaffirms that it will continue to cooperate on a bilateral basis in the area of police training, as it has done in recent years. We call on the Haitian authorities and the international community to continue to support and fund those efforts.

My delegation reiterates the importance of MINUSTAH's role in the protection of vulnerable groups, especially with regard to sexual and gender-based violence. We also stress once again the need for these elements to be dealt with appropriately by the local authorities. We also support the Mission's zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation and abuse.

We also highlight our concern with regard to the prevention and treatment of the cholera epidemic, and we stress the importance of supporting the Secretary-General's initiative in favour of the national plan for the elimination of cholera. We also urge donors to fund the programme.

We also wish to highlight the role played by MINUSTAH through its battalions of engineers in the so-called quick-impact projects and its programmes to reduce community violence.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by congratulating the Argentine presidency for its initiative to hold a debate on the situation in Haiti, an issue accorded the greatest importance by my country. I also wish to acknowledge your presence here in New York, Sir, to preside over the debate, an effort that, as you said in your statement, demonstrates Argentina's support for Haiti, the same support that the entire Latin American and Caribbean community gives to Haiti.

I welcome the new Permanent Representative of Haiti, Mr. Denis Regis, and extend to him our full cooperation. I also congratulate and thank Ms. Sandra Honoré for the report she has presented to the Council (S/2013/493).

I would also like to associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Uruguay on behalf of the Group of Friends of Haiti.

When we see the progress in Haiti, we note that the country is moving along the right path, although a lot of issues and challenges in different spheres need to be addressed. The consolidation of the physical and political reconstruction of the country will depend upon institutional stability, the strengthening of the State and the increased entrenchment of democracy in Haiti. We therefore respectfully call on the Government and all political institutions to guarantee the holding of partial local and legislative elections. Haiti cannot backtrack on its process of political and institutional stabilization.

Colombia takes this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Sandra Honoré, whose excellent credentials make her an outstanding person for the work being conducted in Haiti, especially at this defining moment for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We wish her much success in her role and reiterate to her our full support.

Our country supports the recommendations of the Secretary-General, in particular with regard to the extension of the Mission's mandate until October 2014. We also support the initiative for the Mission's possible downsizing in the near future, with a focus on a gradual and orderly transfer of responsibilities that serves to strengthen institutions and security in Haiti. We welcome the establishment of the joint task force between the Government and the Mission, a mechanism for establishing criteria and determining the best timing and ways to transfer responsibilities.

The Government of Colombia has emphasized that the solution of the problems in Haiti must come from the Haitians themselves. As their friends, we must contribute to that process. We have therefore focused on strengthening national capacity.

My Government has supported MINUSTAH since September 2006. We currently have a police contingent in Haiti that includes experts in various areas, including community policing and the fight against drugs and transnational organized crime. On the bilateral level, with the cooperation of the Government of the United States, Colombia has trained 100 personnel in specific areas such as extortion and kidnapping, sniffer dog handlers in the detection of illicit substances, criminal intelligence and strategic analysis and management.

The Government of Colombia, in accordance with appeals by the Security Council to increase the role of women in peacekeeping, is training 10 women from the Haitian National Police as part of a year-long programme whose curriculum includes learning Spanish. The programme will continue to grow in order to fulfil two objectives, namely, training staff to ensure that the Haitian National Police can continue to assume responsibility for the country's security and providing better tools for confronting security challenges from a gender perspective.

I should like to point out that, at this very moment, the MINUSTAH Police Commissioner, Mr. Luis Carrilho, and the Director-General of the Haitian National Police, General Godson Orelus, are on a visit to Colombia's national police to gain field experience on good practices and lessons learned from Colombia's programme on strengthening institutions that could be adapted for the work being done by the Haitian National Police.

It is important to mention that Colombia is also developing an agenda for bilateral cooperation with Haiti that includes projects such as strengthening the coffee production chain, which aims to establish a sustainable and inclusive value chain that increases the income of small producers, strengthens the cooperative system and increases the export of good quality coffee; developing processes for integrated solid waste management, which began the implementation of a solid-waste plant in the Cabaret area; contributions towards recovery and strengthening food security and nutrition, in response to a request by the national food security coordinator in Haiti; strengthening Haiti's national vocational training institute by way of our national job training service model workshop, including developing a cooperative initiative to strengthen the institute; and, lastly, a community, neighbourhood and housing recovery initiative that aims to contribute to the organizational plan carried out by Haiti, mainly in Port-au-Prince.

Colombia reiterates its commitment to fully supporting Haiti and to the process of strengthening its institutions and promoting development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Arias (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I very much appreciate the Argentine presidency's inviation for Spain to participate in this bi-annual debate on the situation in Haiti. I see that as an acknowledgment of my country's commitment to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and to strengthening institutions and the socioeconomic development of Haiti.

I welcome the presence among us, for the first time, of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and Head of MINUSTAH, Ms. Sandra Honoré. I wish her every success in her new. important and difficult role. I would like to welcome the Ambassador of Haiti, Mr. Denis Regis, and I wish him all the best in his new and important role.

The Secretary-General has submitted a detailed report (S/2013/493), which has already been referred to and which I value and appreciate a great deal. Spain shares the concern reflected in the report as to the stagnation in the political situation in Haiti and the apparent deadlock in the holding of the partial legislative and municipal elections that are supposed to take place before the end of the year. Like MINUSTAH and the rest of the international community in Haiti, we call on representatives of the executive and legislative branches of Haiti to reach an agreement on this matter in the coming weeks. If they manage to do so, it would be an expression of mutual goodwill and a sense of statehood as reflected specifically in progress towards the formation of a transitional Electoral Council.

Spain welcomes the progress in the area of security made by Haiti throughout 2013. Given that positive development, Spain reaffirms its commitment to the current security model in Haiti, which relies on MINUSTAH staff for the maintenance of a safe and stable environment throughout the country, as well as with police forces to meet tasks associated with prosecuting crime.

However, we agree that MINUSTAH should be looking to reconfigure gradually, eventually reducing

its number of troops with missions focusing on assisting civilian populations over the medium-term, especially during emergencies. We very much look forward to a report to that effect, due to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in March 2014. At the same time, the Haitian National Police should continue to be strengthened so that it can assume the functions turned over to it by MINUSTAH.

In terms of human rights, we encourage the Government of Haiti to move forward with its commitment to ratify various United Nations Conventions on the matter, and to take measures for the fulfilment of recommendations made to Haiti in the context of the latest universal periodic review carried out in Geneva. In particular, Spain is concerned about sexual and gender-based violence, with alarming figures in Haiti made worse by frequent impunity for such crimes.

In the field of development cooperation, Spain reiterates its commitment to Haiti. My country is one of the major donors in Haiti, with our cooperation especially focused on access to safe drinking water, the education sector, rural development and the fight against malnutrition. We believe that the cooperation of all stakeholders with the coordination mechanism for external support put in place by the Government of Haiti in late 2012 is very important to the efficiency and transparency of aid.

We want to increase the number of Spanish businesses in Haiti, which are clearly still insufficient. We forecast that foreign investment will be a key instrument to promote socioeconomic development in the country. To that end, it is necessary to ensure legal certainty for foreign investment, strengthen Haitian institutions such as the investment facilitation centre, and implement agreements pertaining to the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments.

Both from a development cooperation and investment point of view, it is essential to maintain political stability, over which some doubts currently exist. For that, the role and work of MINUSTAH is indispensable. Therefore, we reiterate our strong support and commitment to the renewal of the mandate of MINUSTAH and its presence in Haiti over the coming years.

Spain of course associates itself with the statement delivered by the Deputy Head of the delegation of the European Union.

In conclusion, as Argentina's presidency comes to an end this month of August, I am pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, and your country for your active and successful role during this period.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Charles (Trinidad and Tobago): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 14 States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM wishes to commend Argentina, our sister Member State in the Group of Latin Americas and Caribbean States, for its outstanding work as President of the Security Council during the month of August.

We are also heartened by the decision of the Secretary-General to appoint one of our nationals, Ambassador Sandra Honoré, as his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). We express our deepest confidence in her ability to oversee the work of the United Nations system in Haiti, working along with Haitian authorities to discharge the mandate of the Mission. At the same time, CARICOM acknowledges the work of former acting Deputy Special Representative for Haiti, Mr. Nigel Fisher, for his valuable contribution to MINUSTAH and the development of Haiti.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2013/493) provides useful information on the progress of the efforts of the United Nations to bring lasting peace and stability to Haiti through its Mission. For us in CARICOM, Haiti's stability and economic development are inextricably linked to the wider development agenda of our subregion. CARICOM consequently lauds MINUSTAH's efforts, which have promoted increased stability in Haiti. We also welcome the decision of the Security Council, as expressed in resolution 2070 (2012), to renew MINUSTAH's mandate until 15 October 2013, and we support the Secretary-General's recommendation that it be further extended until 2014.

CARICOM also welcomes plans for encouraging investment, which will play a critical role in spurring Haiti's social and economic development. Nevertheless, we submit that international assistance must be aligned with Haiti's national priorities, so as to ensure that there is appropriate national ownership of programmes intended to benefit the Haitian people.

We also applaud the strides made by the Haitian Government in reaching certain political milestones that are indicative of progress. We remain optimistic that the forward momentum achieved thus far will be sustained and that all parties involved in the political process will be able to rise above the differences that exist between them and, in the spirit of compromise, work together to put in place the machinery for holding the overdue partial senatorial, municipal and local elections.

CARICOM notes the progress made in upholding the rule of law in Haiti, as exemplified in the Government's "five Es" policy programme, which lists the rule of law as one of its pillars. We are heartened by the reductions in civil unrest, homicides and kidnappings, as well as the fact that the political and security situation in the country has remained relatively stable, with a notable decrease in major crimes. We are encouraged by the appearance in court in February of two former presidents. We view that as positive signals of an emerging trend towards stability and evidence of the increasing acceptance of the judicial process, which is an indispensable ingredient in the maintenance of the rule of law.

We are further encouraged that the performance of the Haitian National Police has continued to improve since it assumed increasing responsibility for the provision of internal security. We note, however, that the targets of the National Police development plan require continued commitment on the part of the Government and Haiti's partners in order to ensure that adequate resources are available to support the plan's viability.

There have been a number of other positive developments in Haiti following the devastating earthquake in 2010 and the further destruction following Hurricane Sandy last year. They include the establishment of an interministerial commission on human rights, the resettlement of a number of formerly displaced persons and efforts to address the cholera epidemic, including those undertaken in line with the Secretary-General's initiative for supporting national plans in that area. The efforts made by Haitian authorities to promote socioeconomic development, including strides made by President Martelly to attract foreign direct investment, are also noteworthy.

CARICOM remains, however, gravely concerned about the declining international aid for sustaining the work of rehabilitation in Haiti. That situation is worrying in the midst of hurricane season, when Haiti is vulnerable to the effects of devastating storms. We therefore urge all parties with contributions outstanding to pay them in order to ensure the timely execution of the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping missions, whose work is crucial to fostering peace, security, stability, the protection of human rights and the promotion of development in the States concerned.

While progress has been made in several areas, Haiti continues to experience a political, social and economic crisis, and, with that in view, the discussion at hand should not be whether MINUSTAH should conclude its operations but should, rather, focus on addressing the changes required in Haiti and the Mission to ensure that a phased withdrawal is linked to stronger institutions and underpinned by progress towards lasting stability.

In conclusion, CARICOM remains committed to working together with other partners in the international community in support of the agenda of the Haitian Government and MINUSTAH's efforts in that regard, in order to facilitate lasting stability and the social and economic development of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Ms. Sandra Honoré to respond to the comments made.

Ms. Honoré: I would first like to join other speakers in welcoming the initiative of Argentina during its presidency of the Security Council in placing on the Council's agenda the question concerning Haiti and the attendant consideration of the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/493) on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). I deeply appreciate the support expressed for the work of my predecessors in the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for the work of the military, police and civilian personnel, including United Nations volunteers, as well as the support expressed for the efforts of the United Nations country team in Haiti, as we continue to assist the Government of Haiti in ensuring an environment of stability and security. I have also noted the support expressed by members of the Council and other Member States for the Secretary-General's recommendation that the mandate of the Mission be extended by an additional year.

Careful note has been taken of the concerns, recommendations and timely advice to the Mission on critical aspects of its work with the Government of Haiti, in keeping with the conditions-based consolidation plan 2013-2016 submitted by the Secretary-General in

March in the core areas of police development, electoral capacity-building, the rule of law and key governance issues, including the promotion of a dialogue on a minimum political consensus regarding elections, the legislative agenda and the strengthening of State institutions. The progress that has been highlighted by speakers today in those core areas and the benchmarks yet to be attained are vital to the creation of a framework that will contribute to attaining the socioeconomic goals outlined by the Administration of President Martelly in his Government's plans, in particular the "five Es" priorities of education, employment, energy, the environment and the rule of law.

I have also noted the comments on the challenges and systemic deficiencies facing Haiti and on the support that MINUSTAH and the United Nations country teams should provide in the humanitarian field and in efforts of a social-developmental-stabilizing nature, such as the reduction of community violence and quick-impact projects.

The Council should rest assured that members' entreaties that the Mission, in its work on human rights, pay particular attention to the rights of women and children have been noted and will continue to inform our work.

I indicated earlier that the stakeholders in Haiti have all expressed support for dialogue as a means of arriving at an understanding on strengthening the pillars of democratic governance in the country. I cannot overemphasize the importance of such an all-inclusive process in order to overcome the impasse and create a framework in which the efforts of the Government and society can be concentrated with serenity on the country's pressing socioeconomic development requirements. MINUSTAH will continue to support all good-faith efforts in that direction and appreciates the Security Council's continued support for it, as well as all the other mandated tasks.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7025

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7025th meeting
Thursday, 29 August 2013, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Perceval	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Ahmad
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 31 July 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to thePresident of the Security Council (S/2013/457)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

13-46096 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 31 July 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2013/457)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Israel, Lebanon and Spain to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2013/511, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France and Spain.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/457, which contains the text of a letter dated 31 July 2013 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Australia, Azerbaijan, China, France, Guatemala, Luxembourg, Morocco, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2115 (2013).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7026

Security Council

Sixty-eighth year

Provisional

7026th meeting
Thursday, 29 August 2013, 10.20 a.m.
New York

President:	Mrs. Perceval	(Argentina)
Members:	Australia	Ms. Nassau
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Musayev
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyyi
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Mr. Maes
	Morocco	Mr. Loulichki
	Pakistan	Mr. Masood Khan
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Manzi
	Togo	Mr. Menan
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Ms. Power

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2013/444)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

13-46102 (E)

Accessible document

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (S/2013/444)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Serbia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. Zarif, who is joining today's meeting via video teleconference from Pristina.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Enver Hoxhaj to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/444, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

I now give the floor to Mr. Zarif.

Mr. Zarif: During the latest reporting period and since, important progress has continued to be made towards the implementation of the agreement reached between the parties on 19 April. Leaders in Pristina and Belgrade have upheld their commitment to work towards the implementation of the agreement in a timely and constructive manner, notwithstanding some complications in the process. Such progress remains fundamental to building mutual trust and realizing the key aspirations of both parties, the population in Kosovo and, indeed, the region.

Following the appointment in June of a Kosovo-Serb from the north as commander of the northern regional police directorate, his leadership team was announced on 20 August, including a Kosovo-Albanian deputy from the south. On 11 July, the Kosovo Assembly approved a revised version of a draft law on amnesty in order to facilitate the transition of qualified personnel from police offices of the Serbian Ministry of Interior in northern Kosovo to the Kosovo Police. However, that law, along with two others essential for implementation, faces challenges raised by the opposition in Kosovo's Constitutional Court.

In early July, Serbia's Interior Ministry completed the closure of its police offices in the four northern municipalities, subsequently verified by the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), the International Security Force in Kosovo (KFOR) and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). While the local population remains wary of changes in the status quo, the initial stages of implementation in the police area have been met with broad public acceptance.

On 17 June, Serbia's High Judicial Council instructed the three operating Serbian courts in Kosovo to cease receiving cases in anticipation of the full implementation of the court-related components of the 19 April agreement. The provisions on the functioning of a unified justice system in Kosovo — detailed in both the agreement and its integral implementation arrangements of 22 May — will require substantial additional work by the parties in order to be fully realized. It is commendable that each side has demonstrated full awareness of the importance and delicacy of the subject and has proceeded with further talks on implementation in a cautious and deliberate fashion.

During the fifteenth round of meetings in Brussels on 27 August, Prime Minister Dačić and Prime Minister Thaçi discussed the complex subjects of telecommunication and energy — on which progress has been slow — and agreed that discussions would continue at the technical level. The parties also took stock of progress in the implementation of the 19 April agreement, including preparations for holding local elections in Kosovo on 3 November. Given the short time frame, organizing local elections throughout Kosovo has presented particular challenges.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe responded swiftly and garnered necessary resources to facilitate voting in the northern municipalities, as well as by eligible internally displaced persons. The registration of political entities for the elections is also an intensive exercise in the short time window. Although registration has begun, it remains a challenge that requires a flexible, confidence-building approach from all quarters, as does finding other mutually acceptable voting arrangements and material.

It is crucial that elections succeed in delivering viable local authority able to properly represent and defend the interests of local communities, as foreseen in the agreement. To that end, it is important that full participation in the election be encouraged, particularly in the northern municipalities, where local authority has long lingered under dispute and controversy. To achieve that result, steadfastness and flexibility will be required from each side, in particular to address effectively the concerns of the local population and overcome the uncertainty that currently prevails in the north.

As I have previously stated in the Council, the implementation of the historic 19 April agreement and each of its elements is a delicate process that demands sustained efforts and focus. In that light, it is essential for the parties to keep their focus on the implementation of what has been agreed, without introducing additional fundamental issues that are, at present, outside of the political dialogue agenda. Doing otherwise may put at risk the progress achieved so far.

Of equal importance for success is a sustained effort to improve confidence and promote progress in inter-community reconciliation. That is a shared responsibility of political leaders at all levels and will also require continuing international support. Accordingly, long-standing issues of vital importance for reconciliation should also receive renewed attention and vigor during this period, alongside bolstering the political process.

The determination of the fate of persons missing since the time of the conflict has made little new progress in recent months, despite the joint efforts of the Kosovo-Albanian and Serb family associations of missing persons to encourage more effective and collaborative action. While EULEX is prepared to undertake new investigations, within its mandate and means, to support comprehensive reviews of legacy cases, and to support new police investigations when and wherever new evidence can be uncovered, it cannot succeed in that task without additional information from all concerned.

Achieving greater success in that regard requires foremost the exertion of renewed political will to encourage more information to be brought forward and to afford adequate witness protection. The affected families rightly demand justice, reparation and closure on the cases of their missing loved ones. On the eve of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances, I call upon the parties to rededicate their commitment to that end.

Of similar importance are the further steps being taken to safeguard religious and cultural sites in Kosovo, both in the context of the high-level dialogue and work at the municipal level. Successful preparations by the Kosovo police have enabled it to take over from KFOR the responsibility for the protection of the Peć Patriarchate, in early August. It is important that such efforts do not falter, as is threatened, for example, by the procedural delays in the establishment of the cultural heritage council in Rahovec/Orahovac.

An important and timely visit in June by Ms. Navanethem Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, served to underscore many of the same issues and outline a range of areas in which institutions responsible for the rule of law and human rights protection in Kosovo could be made more effective. Her recommendations focused, in particular, on remedies for weak legislation, more vigorous implementation of the law and tougher responses to instances of hate speech and ethnic intolerance.

On 28 June, the European Council issued important decisions on its enlargement, including the decision on the start of the accession negotiations with Serbia and the opening of negotiations for a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo.

Those major steps are, in great measure, attributable to the visionary leadership demonstrated by both sides during the European Union-led political dialogue. Helping the parties sustain momentum is now the shared and central goal of all the international presences in Kosovo and beyond.

Among the greatest challenges is building confidence in the process in the north, where little such confidence presently exists. I wish to acknowledge

efforts being made in that respect by the parties and, equally, to note the significant gap that is yet to be closed. The formation, outside the framework of the 19 April agreement, of a provisional assembly for Kosovo and Metohija is a sign of the still predominant apprehension in northern Kosovo concerning the implementation of the agreement.

The political challenge involved is difficult to overestimate, not least in view of the ambitious time lines foreseen in the implementation plan. Accordingly, the parties should persevere with a high degree of creativity and flexibility and redouble efforts to address the substantive and detailed questions emanating from the population in the north.

For our part, UNMIK continues to actively adapt its activities in the field to most effectively support the political process and related work on the ground. UNMIK's facilitation and mediation roles have been enhanced by additional experienced personnel in the north, while the UNMIK Administration in Mitrovica has continued its active engagement in local mediation and conflict prevention.

Preparations are currently under way for the implementation of confidence-building and reconciliation projects in a number of key areas throughout Kosovo, mostly through the United Nations Kosovo team and other international partners. Our local mediation role and capacity continue to be drawn upon throughout Kosovo, providing an effective communication link in support of resolving practical public and social service issues. We are contributing to building local confidence, which helps keep residual tensions low and, in turn, broadens the space for further progress in the political dialogue.

The implementation of the 19 April agreement requires concentrated efforts and the avoidance of distractions related to issues that are yet to be tackled through direct dialogue. Through its ongoing support to the parties as they pursue solutions by making necessary compromises, the Council continues to play a key role in supporting the long-term success of this process. I wish to express deep appreciation to the Council members for their continued political engagement in that regard.

I close by thanking you, Madam President, and all members of the Council for their support for UNMIK's work as we continue to promote progress and reconciliation on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Zarif for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

Mr. Mrkić (Serbia): I thank you, Madam President, and members of the Security Council for convening this meeting under resolution 1244 (1999).

At the outset, let me express my gratitude to the Council for continually addressing the situation in Kosovo and Metohija, which is demonstrated by the fact that the Council convenes meetings to discuss this issue regularly, every three months. I also thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his commitment and dedication in guiding the United Nations team in the field and for his daily efforts to find a way to overcome the still-deep gap of distrust that divides the ethnic communities in Kosovo and Metohija.

The Republic of Serbia, too, is firmly resolved to work to achieve that goal, as we believe that reducing the distrust is the only right way, that is, a precondition for creating better living conditions for all. Last April, we signed the Brussels agreement in order to facilitate the solution of questions of vital importance for all people in the province, hopeful that the signers from Pristina would share our enthusiasm in overcoming the problems that we have been facing for far too long.

However, it is with regret that I have to state that that has not always been the case. We do hope that there is a political will in Pristina, although we know that concrete results in solving people's problems, particularly those besetting minority ethnic groups in the province, are in very short supply. We therefore consider that the continued presence of the United Nations in Kosovo and Metohija is of paramount importance for future developments, especially at this sensitive juncture when, after a very long time, possibilities can now be discerned for all those living in Kosovo and Metohija to begin to live better and for its ethnic communities to begin to overcome tensions.

The tensions between the communities have existed for decades, and it would be illusory to expect them to disappear within a matter of months. If indeed we long for a future where everyone can live in peace, without fear for their lives, we have to solidify the foundations laid down by the Brussels agreement and work, day in and day out, towards bridging the deep gap brought

about by decades of lack of trust and confidence. On the long road, in addition to goodwill and hard work, we also need an honest broker, not someone who will do our job for us but who will ensure that all the participants in the process are guided by the idea of the long-term betterment of all our people, rather than by the predominance of the ethnic majority.

It is precisely in that role of impartial overseer of the process of historic reconciliation that the Republic of Serbia perceives the United Nations. For several decades now, the world Organization has worked to improve the living conditions for all communities in Kosovo and Metohija, and it is equipped with the necessary knowledge and experience for the road that lies ahead.

I have to say that we would have liked to have made more progress on that road, alone and without outside assistance, and thus be able to seek agreements with representatives from Pristina on all matters without assistance. That in itself would demonstrate the political maturity of both sides. However, just as the signing of the Brussels agreement would not have been possible this year without European Union mediation, without Baroness Ashton, I am afraid the implementation of the agreements may not be possible without the active participation of the United Nations.

While we are firmly resolved to prove that Serbia is up to the challenges and tasks with which it is presented, we also need a guarantee that the other side will not undermine the agreements already reached. In view of the enormous efforts invested so far by the Republic of Serbia in finding solutions acceptable to all sides, we would like to see — and we do not see — the other side investing efforts to bring about very necessary changes in the field. Apparently, the status quo suits the other side much more, and that is why we assume that they want international actors to leave the province.

I am sure that the Council needs no reminding that the task of the international presence in Kosovo and Metohija is not to promote the independence of Kosovo. By resolution 1244 (1999), this body established the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and charged it with the mandate of promoting security, stability and respect for human rights in the province. Accordingly, what we are dealing with is the setting of standards, which is our primary goal — not the establishment of a status, which appears to be that of Pristina.

As our goals — at least in that domain — evidently differ, we consider that the Brussels agreement is only the beginning of the normalization of relations, not the end. We would not be warning of attempts to undermine agreements had we not already registered a number of them in this short period of time. For instance, satisfaction is expressed in the report (S/2013/444) of the Secretary-General over the amendment of the law on the budget in the Assembly of Kosovo. We, too, would be satisfied if it did not break a prior bilateral agreement. In fact, the amendments to the law are contrary to the agreement made in the working group on the implementation of the integrated border management agreement last January.

Under that agreement, the funds collected from the transfer of goods for individuals and legal entities in the municipalities in northern Kosovo and Metohija are to be credited to the fund for the development of the north. The amendments adopted in the Assembly, however, provide for the establishment of a development trust fund for the association of Serb municipalities in Kosovo and Metohija. In that way, the funds would be initially credited to the Kosovo fund — treasury/budget — and only then to the fund for the development of the north. That modification runs counter to the spirit of the political agreement. Rather than eliminating the obstacles to the normalization of life, it creates additional ones.

Another example of the breach of trust is the situation in Brdjani. The report states that Serbs protested because of the attempts by internally displaced Albanians to build houses in that part of northern Kosovska Mitrovica. The truth of the matter, however, is the persistence of Kosovo and Metohija Albanians in altering the ethnic structure of Brdjani through land grabbing and building without a permit. In fact, local Serbs had agreed with returnee Albanians that they could rebuild their houses without any encumbrance whatsoever. Brdjani, it should be borne in mind, is a small place where everybody knows everybody else and where such agreements were possible. Yet the Serbs from Brdjani protested only after they discovered that Kosovo and Metohija Albanians were planning to build 172 apartments in that locality for veterans of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army who had never lived there, and only for a fraction of that number for Albanians who had lived there before 1999.

That is yet another example in which UNMIK mediation would be of great help. We therefore

propose that the Secretary-General request his Special Representative to draw up an exact list of Kosovo and Metohija Albanians who lived in Brdjani prior to June 1999 and to present it with his next report. We are convinced that such transparency would contribute significantly to the resolution of disputes and that we need a neutral international presence to achieve it.

Building confidence in Kosovo institutions among minority communities is not aided by the signing of the 1 July military agreement with Albania, mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General. The Republic of Serbia protested the signing in the belief that the agreement on military cooperation should be placed in the context of the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Its implementation is sufficiently complex even without the less than constructive surprises by Pristina, especially those with destabilization potential.

The exchange of military personnel, provided for by the agreement, would result in an increased presence of ethnic Albanians in a very small geographic area, interspersed with a number of enclaves populated by Serbs, Gorani and other non-Albanians, thereby adding to the anxiety of those already isolated communities. Such an agreement has a potential, in case a political decision is taken, to threaten the security of the people in a real way and to repeat the ethnic pogrom of March 2004. Whether or not such a scenario comes to pass, the signing of that agreement sends a clear message to all members of non-Albanian communities as to who controls force. It should be borne in mind that, at least in theory, the agreement provides for the possibility that full military force could be deployed, since the Republic of Albania does possess heavy weapons; whereas, at least formally, the so-called Kosovo Security Force does not.

Of course, we do not expect that Pristina will use the agreement with Albania for military actions in the field, but we must emphasize the consequence: intimidation of minority communities. Likewise, we did not believe that the pogrom was possible before it happened in 2004, or the dispatch of Pristina's special force to northern Kosovo and Metohija in the summer of 2011.

At that time, we also kept telling our fellow Serbs that threats to their lives were a thing of the past, but the reality contradicted us. If we want to solidify the trust that we have only begun to build, we now need much more than assumptions. We need guarantees that force will not be used.

Tensions continue, not only in the north but in the entire territory of Kosovo and Metohija. The Serbs living south of the Ibar River are facing problems. Although those problems are different than those of the Serbs in the north, they merit attention and serious efforts to find solutions. Particularly worrisome is the fact that some problems are institutional in nature and, as a result, they involve partial and sometimes full denial of basic minority rights in terms of security and restitution of property.

Although the report includes a separate chapter on northern Kosovo and Metohija, it is of particular concern that, by choosing to treat the subject this way, it actually minimizes emphasis on developments important for Serbs and members of other non-majority communities in Kosovo and Metohija. We propose that, for the next report, the Secretary-General asks his Special Representative to prepare an exhaustive review of the situation in which the Serbs, Gorani and the members of other communities south of the Ibar River live. Such a report would be very illustrative if it included examples of institutional encumbrances related to the exercise of rights, the registration of ethnically motivated criminal offences and the realization of property rights.

The property rights of Serbs are violated throughout Kosovo and Metohija, in particular by indiscriminate sales of companies in Serbian communities to Albanian business people through the Privatization Agency of Kosovo. The sales affect the economic viability of the Serbian communities, destroy conditions for return and undermine security. In addition, it has been a common practice to put only ethnic Albanian workers on lists of employees entitled to monetary compensations from the sale of a company.

In that connection, I recall the position maintained within the United Nations that the Privatization Agency of Kosovo is not a legal successor of the Kosovo Trust Agency, since it has not been established under a law in force in Kosovo and Metohija in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

In the light of the property issues mentioned, I consider it necessary to re-examine the decision on funding the Privatization Agency of Kosovo. It would be ill-advised to leave such a sensitive issue as privatization, which concerns all minority rights, within the competence of the Privatization Agency of Kosovo. The latter has already misused its powers in the interest of the majority community on a number of occasions.

It has been 14 years since the Council adopted a decision on the establishment and on the competencies of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo and Metohija, but some key aims of the international community remain unfulfilled. According to data from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, there still remain 210,148 internally displaced persons from the province living in Serbia today. More than 70 per cent of them are Serbs, 17 per cent Roma, as well as Gorani, Bosniacs, Montenegrins and others.

Tension in Kosovo and Metohija continues to flare. Despite our efforts, we have not succeeded in reducing it, demonstrated by the security data presented in the report. It has been pointed out that, taken separately for each quarterly reporting period, it has been hard to make precise conclusions on the basis of the number of security incidents that took place during a particular period. As it stands, it is possible to wrongly conclude that the security situation is improving; whereas, in fact, we still have a long way to go to achieve that goal.

After the completion of the report, which states that the number of incidents related to minority communities has been reduced as compared to those in the preceding period, the murder of an elderly Serbian woman was discovered. The perpetrators were never identified. That reveals a new problem: the report is silent on the number of discovered and tried perpetrators and the number of cases, solved and unsolved. Also, no mention is made of the measures taken by the authorities — whether the police, the prosecutors or the courts.

The practice of not punishing the perpetrators of violence against Serbs therefore continues. We still do not know who killed 14 reapers at Staro Gracko in 1999, following the arrival of the international presences, or who shot the Serbian children as they played on the river at Goraždevac in 2003. Every year, as we remember those who lost their lives, we expect to hear what has been done concerning them, but we have had no answer for more than 10 years now. The pogrom of March 2004, which resulted in 19 dead and approximately 4,000 displaced, has not yet led to initiating a single court proceeding.

Had at least one of those cases been solved or had we seen any headway in investigations, we would now have something to prove to the Serbian community in Kosovo and Metohija that, over time, justice would be served in each case. We would be able to tell the community that meting out justice would not only discourage potential perpetrators from committing violence again, but that, over time, it would create a different climate among Kosovo inhabitants, who, in that way, might one day become guarantors of their security.

Yet, none of those cases has been solved so far, which leads us to believe that the culture of impunity obtains in Kosovo and Metohija. It is therefore no surprise that violent demonstrations broke out in Pristina after EULEX arrested a few suspects in connection with war crimes committed against minorities. I repeat, in an environment like that, minorities surely do not feel safe. If the environment were at least a bit different, we would be witnessing more returns, and our Liaison Officer, who assumed his duties in June, would not be one of only 118 Serbs in Pristina, a city that numbered 40,000 Serbs not so long ago. There were only 302 Serb returnees to Kosovo and Metohija in 2012, fewer than in 2011, when 464 persons returned. We are witnessing a continued decrease in the already small numbers of returnees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has pointed that fact out. Even though she offers a positive assessment of the legal and institutional frameworks for human rights protection, the High Commissioner indicates that their enforcement remains insufficient. That brings us back to the question of Pristina's political will to address those issues.

The lack of institutional clarity, highlighted in a joint study by the Council of Europe and the European Union, would not be such a big problem, if it were not yet another issue used by Pristina to intimidate the Serbian population by resorting to arrests under secret indictments. We continue to witness unfounded charges arbitrarily pressed against Serbs for war crimes. Equally disturbing is the postponement of the amnesty law, which, incidentally, barely made it through the Parliament, which makes Serbs justifiably apprehensive that, pending its implementation, many more of them might be arrested.

The Republic of Serbia takes this opportunity to call on EULEX, which is competent to find those responsible for war crimes, to make a contribution towards finding a solution to that problem by presenting a list of Serbs indicted, without interfering in individual court proceedings.

As on previous occasions, I would like to reiterate the importance of a full and effective investigation into allegations of people being killed for organ trafficking. The Republic of Serbia is ready to continue cooperating

with the EULEX investigation team in order to establish the truth and to achieve justice for the victims, as soon as possible.

I must point out that the intimidation and discouragement of returns can be much more subtle, if, for instance, one denies the history of an entire people. It so happens that we continue to witness attempts, made within UNESCO, to rename the cultural and historical heritage of the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija as the heritage of Kosovo without mentioning Metohija, in other words, to 'Kosovize' it. Those attempts are tantamount to destroying evidence of the long existence and survival of Serbs for centuries in that area, all for the purpose of promoting the so-called independence of Kosovo.

As far as the Republic of Serbia is concerned, it does not, nor will it, recognize the unilateral declaration of independence. Let me also express our gratitude to all those Member States that share and support our position of principle. Too many latent tensions continue to exist everywhere in Kosovo and Metohija. Our experience has shown that often the slightest incident can trigger a situation that can escalate into protests with unforeseeable consequences.

Great efforts and concrete steps are needed to ensure physical safety and to secure the property of minority communities. Those steps need to be taken, as stated in the report, by Pristina, and we believe that the process will evolve a lot more easily and faster with UNMIK's assistance.

The first agreement to normalize relations is a good beginning, but it only sets a framework for the hard work that still lies ahead of us. We consider those foundations good enough to build a better tomorrow, and we must not miss this opportunity. We cannot simply ignore obstructions, for that not only means a return to the past but also signals a deepening in the mistrust, which we want to overcome.

Aware of the opportunity before it, the Republic of Serbia expects the continued assistance of the international community, the United Nations in particular, on the road to confidence-building, which we believe is the only sound foundation for bringing about a normal life for everyone in Kosovo and Metohija.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Mr. Hoxhaj.

Mr. Hoxhaj: It is a great pleasure to address the Council again today and to inform it about key political developments that have taken place in Kosovo over the past three months. Today, I would like to brief the Council on the following issues: the state of the implementation of the normalization agreement between the Republics of Kosovo and Serbia, the landmark progress made towards European Union integration, and stability and achievements on a number of domestic issues.

Let me start by expressing our sincere gratitude to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his support of peace and stability in Kosovo and the region. We welcome his efforts to understand the situation on the ground and to present a more realistic overview of the progress in Kosovo.

In the past three months, Kosovo has engaged proactively in implementing the obligations arising from the first agreement governing the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. There is a new political dynamic in Kosovo, where we have achieved substantial results. However, serious challenges remain, which can be overcome only with political commitment, flexibility and visionary dedication. In my view, reaching inter-State agreement is a good basis for the normalization of relations and mutual acceptance by both countries, but that should also serve as a basis for reconciliation and recognition.

Since 19 April, 15 joint meetings between Prime Ministers Ivica Dačić and Hashim Thaçi have been held in Brussels, thanks to the excellent mediation of Baroness Ashton on behalf of the European Union. In line with the provisions of the implementation plan, the main issues discussed in those meetings were: dismantling illegal and parallel Serb security and judicial structures; the formation of a Serb municipality association; the organization of local elections; and discussions on energy and telecommunication. I can confirm here today that there has been some progress in the integration of a police force, establishing an association and finalizing preparations for local elections. At the same time, there has been no significant progress on the integration of justice structures and in the areas of energy and telecommunication.

On 26 June, the Assembly of Kosovo ratified an inter-State agreement between Kosovo and Serbia by a more than two-third majority, namely, 84 votes, which included support by the opposition. After that, our Government submitted a number of amendments to the

Assembly regarding the law on local self-governance, the rights of communities and the budget. Those legislative changes will facilitate the implementation of the agreement and will enable Kosovo's institutions to extend their democratic and legal authority into the northern municipalities.

On 11 July, after a long society-wide debate, the Assembly of Kosovo approved a law on amnesty. The law aims to facilitate the integration of former employees from Serb parallel structures into Kosovo's institutional system. The generous list of exemptions from criminal prosecution and punishment for criminal offences is a huge compromise for our side. It is a political act taken for the sake of the normalization of inter-State relations and in support of peace and reconciliation.

The amnesty law has led to a political reaction from an opposition faction in Kosovo. Therefore, the law is currently under review by our Constitutional Court. As a democratic country, we fully respect the independence of the justice system. However, we remain hopeful that the Court will confirm that the amnesty law is in accordance with our Constitution.

In accordance with the normalization agreement and the implementation plan, we have had a breakthrough regarding the establishment of the association of Serb municipalities. A preparation team has been established, consisting of representatives from the four northern municipalities. The team will prepare a statute for the future association of the Serb municipalities, based on the statute of the existing Association of Kosovo Municipalities and in accordance with Kosovo law.

Another area of progress is the integration of the former Serb police into Kosovo's law enforcement institutions. Some concrete steps have taken place already in this area. The Kosovo police has established a regional police department for the northern municipalities. It has also appointed a provisional regional director of police, who is working in accordance with Kosovo law. There is a clear legal framework and a timetable. The upcoming months will be critical for the integration of former Serb police into the Kosovo police system. This will be important in order to restore the rule of law and public order in that part of Kosovo.

The next local elections will be held on 3 November throughout Kosovo. In the northern municipalities, local elections will be organized under the leadership of Kosovo's Central Election Commission and with the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The local elections in the northern municipalities will be organized in line with Kosovo law, and the role of the OSCE is to facilitate that in a number of technical aspects. These will be the first municipal elections that will establish democratic institutions in the three northern municipalities. Therefore, we invite the local population to participate in this crucial electoral process. The elections represent an opportunity to build a joint commitment and new civic obligations towards a multi-ethnic Kosovo.

The participation of different parties is essential to ensure political competition and respect for the freedom of political association. To that end, Kosovo institutions are working to create a comprehensive list of voters in the northern municipalities, including those who are currently living outside Kosovo. However, Belgrade has a critical role to play by encouraging the participation of local Serb populations.

During the reporting period, we observed some progress on the implementation of the agreements reached thus far. But, at the same time, there are some clear tendencies in Belgrade to deviate from the original obligations deriving from the normalization agreement. On positive moves, we also welcome the closure of the Serb police offices in the northern municipalities. At the same time, there is evidence that members of Serb security structures continue to operate from private settings, remaining on standby to destabilize that part of Kosovo.

In the area of justice, there is no progress yet on the implementation of provisions, and that is due to a lack of political will in Belgrade. On the issue of the integration of justice personnel, there is no progress at all. We have offered the most advanced options to integrate those structures into Kosovo's constitutional system, but Belgrade has consistently tried to change the substance of the normalization agreement. The agreement foresees a unique system of police, justice and local governance throughout Kosovo, and Belgrade should stick to the deal.

On integrated border management, some progress has been noted in finalizing the construction of five permanent joint border points, which also sets the inter-State border line between Kosovo and Serbia. However, there are obstacles from Belgrade, which is not allowing Kosovo's citizens to travel through Serbia with Kosovo documents. That is a violation of the agreement on the freedom of movement. Serbia is also

undermining the agreement on customs by collecting custom tariffs from Kosovo citizens who cross Serbia's territory to enter Kosovo as their final destination.

In addition, Belgrade's failure this week to accept the agreement on energy and telecommunication, which has been pending for the past two years, is the best testimony of the lack of political will to resolve outstanding inter-State issues. However, we welcome the opening of the Kosovo Liaison Office in Belgrade and are rotating our Ambassador from Zagreb to Belgrade to start the mission.

In the past three months, Kosovo marked a milestone on its path to European Union membership. On 28 June, the Council of the European Union took a decision to authorize the European Commission to negotiate a stabilization and association agreement between the European Union and Kosovo. That decision represents an acknowledgement of our progress regarding democratic governance and the normalization of relations with Serbia. It opens, for the first time, a clear perspective for establishing contractual relations between the Republic of Kosovo and the European Union. By signing a stabilization and association agreement, Kosovo will undergo the same processes as all States in the region before joining the European Union.

We continue to trust that the stabilization and association agreement will contain all the essential elements to enable Kosovo to achieve the conditions necessary to be able to submit an application for membership. That will offer a strategic framework for social, economic and political modernization and transformation. It represents a legal framework that offers stability and security for foreign direct investments, economic growth and job creation. We have already formed a negotiating team and begun preparations for negotiating the provisions of the stabilization and association agreement. Based on the commitment of the European Union, we expect to finalize the agreement during spring 2014. Let me reiterate that Kosovo's European agenda remains a national priority for all political forces in the country.

Regarding visa liberalization, we have approved a package of laws that regulate a number of critical security-related issues, such as the status of foreigners, asylum, citizenship, the prevention of trafficking and integrated border management. That package of laws has now also been passed by the Kosovo Assembly. We expect new dynamics that will enable our citizens to travel visa-free to Europe, as most of the benchmarks are already met.

Over the past three months, Kosovo has strengthened its international position and increased its interaction with multilateral organizations. In June we welcomed the recognition of our independence by important countries such as Egypt, the United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Guyana and El Salvador. More than 100 Member States have recognized Kosovo thus far, and we have established diplomatic relations with nearly 60 States. After achieving membership in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, we recently became a member of the Council of Europe Development Bank.

In this reporting period, the political, economic and security situation continued to be stable. Kosovo has the most stable political landscape in the region. Despite the global financial crisis, we have managed to maintain macro-economic stability and to have an annual growth of 5 per cent.

Inter-ethnic relations have also been very good and without any significant incidents except in the north of the country. Similarly, interfaith relations have been a positive example of peaceful coexistence for the entire region. A special multi-ethnic task force for the protection of cultural and religious heritage has been established within the Kosovo police. It consists of 202 officers who provide security for 23 monuments and sites of Serb heritage in Kosovo. The task force will also soon take responsibility for the security of the Patriarchate of Pejë.

The security situation throughout Kosovo has improved, mainly as a result of the normalization agreement with Serbia. Such improvement is essential to promoting economic development and job creation. The Kosovo police, in cooperation with the European Union Rule of Law Mission and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), has continued to display effective leadership in maintaining security throughout the country. However, in the past three months Serb security structures have caused a number of incidents, preventing displaced Albanians from returning and damaging citizens' private and public property.

The Government has continued its institutional, financial and political support for the return and reintegration of Kosovo communities. Since March, 258 persons have returned to communities around the

country. We have launched various activities aimed at fostering the reintegration of community returnees. We have constructed 26 new houses and implemented infrastructure and community-based projects.

On 9 July, the North Atlantic Council announced that the Kosovo Security Force had reached operational capability in line with NATO standards and principles. As a multi-ethnic force and a source of stability, the Kosovo Security Force has now strengthened its capacity to deal with disaster management and humanitarian assistance. The announcement marks an important moment in the expansion of relations between Kosovo and NATO and confirms that Kosovo is an example of a country with democratic, civilian oversight of the security sector. As ever, we express our gratitude to KFOR for its assistance to us in maintaining security and peace in Kosovo. Kosovo hopes to join NATO's Partnership for Peace programme in the near future and to become an equal member of NATO alongside other countries of the region.

Our institutions have continued to promote the protection of human rights and to strengthen institutional mechanisms for human rights. With the United Nations Human Rights Commissioner's visit to Kosovo in June, we gave further confirmation of our commitment to protecting and observing international human-rights standards. We will continue to invest in protecting and promoting the political, economic and socio-cultural rights of all communities living in Kosovo.

The fate of missing persons is an issue that continues to haunt our society; it requires continued genuine commitment and cooperation from Belgrade and the support of the international community. The sooner it is resolved, the greater will be the chances for inter-ethnic and inter-State reconciliation between Kosovo and Serbia. We have already raised this issue several times at our meetings in Brussels. We need to do our utmost to uncover the truth about the fate of those missing. In that regard, I think the United Nations can and should play a more important role.

Kosovo is grateful to the United Nations for its role in building State institutions and consolidating peace. We are all aware that State- and peacebuilding can result in long-term success only when they promote and enable democratic national ownership and include timely exit strategies. Fourteen years after the establishment of an international civilian and military presence, in June 1999, it is now time for the Council to consider removing Kosovo from its agenda. The moment has come to adopt a new resolution recognizing the progress that has been made on the ground and that we have been reporting on a regular basis for many years now.

While there is no doubt that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) played an active role in stabilizing Kosovo between 1999 and 2007, it is now important to acknowledge that it no longer has a role to play in Kosovo. It is time for the Council to consider transforming UNMIK into a United Nations political office for coordinating all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. In that regard, the most important function for the United Nations in Kosovo would be to support us in our preparation for admission to the United Nations. We understand that, in order to achieve that, what is needed is political will and unity on the part of Council members. We call on the Security Council to take concrete, speedy and definitive action in order to enable Kosovo to take its rightful place in the family of free and democratic nations.

Let me conclude by reiterating the strong commitment of our Government and people to continuing to make Kosovo a successful and prosperous country, while leaving the legacies of the past behind and advancing our integration into the international democratic community. We remain strongly committed to fully implementing the normalization agreement with Serbia, and we take seriously all the obligations necessary for ensuring the northern municipalities' peaceful integration into Kosovo institutions. However, the full normalization of inter-State relations will be achieved only when Serbia recognizes Kosovo's independence. Similarly, the international community's contribution will come to fruition when Kosovo becomes a full and equal Member of the United Nations.

We remain deeply grateful to the Council, our European and NATO partners and the wider international community for helping Kosovo to become a multi-ethnic, democratic and cohesive State.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I would like to thank Special Representative Zarif for his briefing. I would also like to take a moment to welcome the new Permanent Representative of China, Ambassador Liu Jieyi. And, of course, we welcome the Ministers

for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo and Serbia, Mr. Hoxhaj and Mr. Mrkić, back to the Council, and thank them both very much for their briefings. I commend both Governments, and in particular Prime Minister Thaçi and Prime Minister Dačić, for their leadership, which has led to agreement on principles for normalizing relations and has advanced their countries' respective paths towards European integration.

Today I would like to make three points, regarding the opportunities presented by the dialogue process facilitated by the European Union (EU), upcoming elections and progress on issues important to advancing normalization and understanding.

First, the United States congratulates Serbia and Kosovo on the important steps taken towards implementing the 19 April agreement to normalize relations. Our EU partners recognize the significant steps taken by both Governments, and we welcome the European Council decisions on 28 June to open accession negotiations with Serbia and to open negotiations with Kosovo on a stabilization and association agreement. The dialogue has created opportunities to enhance stability in the region for both the security and the economic prosperity of the people of Kosovo and Serbia.

The Prime Ministers and EU High Representative Ashton deserve our strong praise and continued support for their efforts. We commend the Government of Serbia's work towards integrating the police into a unitary framework and chain of command by closing parallel stations in northern Kosovo. Equally important, Kosovo has taken steps to amend its laws so that implementation can move forward.

The fact that both Governments have posted liaison officers in each other's capitals will also help improve relations and further dialogue. We also thank the European Union Rule of Law Mission and NATO for their continuing support in the implementation of the dialogue agreements. As both Foreign Ministers have acknowledged, much remains to be done to fulfil the commitments they have made. We hope to see soon the finalization of agreements on energy and telecommunication, progress in the working groups in Brussels to consolidate legitimate and effective judicial and police structures in the north, and the full implementation of all previous dialogue agreements, including on customs and integrated border management.

Secondly, we look forward to the 3 November municipal elections in Kosovo and appreciate the integral role that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been playing to help facilitate what should be free, fair and transparent elections. The United States urges eligible voters throughout Kosovo to exercise their right to participate in the democratic process. We especially urge minority communities, including Kosovo Serbs, to participate and make their voices heard. By voting, they have the opportunity not only to choose their leaders but also to hold them accountable and ensure effective and responsive local governance.

Thirdly, I want to highlight opportunities to overcome the violence of the past and promote reconciliation between communities in Kosovo. The United States welcomes Kosovo's efforts on the protection of religious and cultural heritage, including the establishment of a new multi-ethnic unit within the Kosovo Police to protect sites throughout the country, as agreed in the dialogue. That unit is in the process now of working with the Kosovo Force to assume primary responsibility for the protection of the Pejë/Peć Patriarchate. The United States encourages the Government of Kosovo to continue to work with its international partners, including NATO, the OSCE, the EU and UNESCO, to ensure that the holy sites of all religions are restored and protected.

As noted again in the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/444), missing persons are an important and unresolved issue that demands critical attention from all parties. We reiterate the call on all concerned, particularly the Governments of Kosovo and Serbia, to intensify collaborative efforts to locate missing persons, so that families can finally obtain answers and, hopefully, some personal resolution. Ensuring safe, stable and sustainable conditions for returnees is another critical aspect of moving forward that requires further attention and much work.

Let me conclude by encouraging the Governments to maintain the momentum of the past few months. We want Kosovo and Serbia to succeed and thrive, so it is up to their leaders and the people of Kosovo and Serbia to seize the opportunities created by the dialogue and the European Union negotiations to build the foundations for a secure and prosperous future. We stand ready to assist in any way.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Let me at the outset thank Mr. Farid Zarif, Special

Representative of the Secretary-General, for his very exhaustive briefing and welcome him here today. We also of course welcome Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkic and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

The positive trend in the relationship between the Serbian and Kosovo parties over the past few months has been given significant impetus in the wake of the signing by the two sides in Brussels on 22 May of a new agreement for an implementation plan for the first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations of 19 April 2013. That latest agreement, in particular, lays out concrete steps and timelines for implementation, including the necessary adjustments to the existing legal frameworks to accommodate the establishment of an association or community of Kosovo Serb municipalities, the integration of the Serbian police and judicial structures, and preparation for local elections.

More encouraging still, the parties have maintained and strengthened their commitments through the holding of high-level and expert-level meetings to consolidate and accelerate implementation of the agreements. In that regard, the parties agreed on 20 June on the composition of the management team representing the four northern Kosovo municipalities, which will draft the statute of the association or community of the Kosovo Serb municipalities and exercise some of its powers on an ad interim basis.

All of the those developments would not have been possible without the firm commitment of both parties and good offices, specifically those of the European Union. In that regard, I would like to commend the commitment of the European Union, specifically that of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms. Catherine Ashton. We commend her leadership, determination and perseverance to overcome difficulties and work with the parties in negotiations aimed at bringing about specific outcomes. We are optimistic about the positive impacts of her efforts and commitment to assist the populations involved with regard to regional stability and the prospects for integration within the European Union.

Given the dynamism initiated and sustained by the Kosovo and Serbian parties, one could expect some resistance to emerge and stand in the way of the implementation of the 19 April agreement and the subsequent agreements. In that respect, we praise the responsible attitude of the Serbian leaders to plead the case with the leaders in northern Kosovo to implement the agreements. We are counting on the involvement of local authorities and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to promote dialogue and restore confidence.

The momentum towards rapprochement and consolidation gradually taking hold between the two sides has seen a number of initiatives related to protecting religious and cultural heritage. The measures are symbolic but they are fundamental in terms of promoting and building mutual respect between the different components of society. We praise those efforts, particularly those of UNMIK and UNESCO and other partners. We are pleased to note the completion of the recruitment of police officers to protect cultural heritage.

With respect to security issues, the situation continues to be calm overall. However, there are some multi-ethnic areas where tensions persist and incidents affecting minorities have occurred. We call on the parties to work together to continue to control those tensions.

We would particularly like to applaud the cooperation between UNMIK and the international and regional organizations present on the ground in such varied areas as the rule of law, human rights, security and returns. As the Secretary-General says in his report (S/2013/444), cooperation and coordination among the various international presences are key in helping the parties move forward on the implementation of the 19 April agreement.

The historic agreements that the parties were able to reach are a milestone that we hope is irreversible as far as the process of normalization of the relationship is concerned. The European Union, first and foremost, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO and UNMIK are called upon to continue playing their valuable roles in facilitating the achievement of the goals of peace, stability and reconciliation in that important part of the Balkans. But above all, it is up to the Serbian and Kosovo parties to move forward with the same momentum, sense of responsibility and spirit of compromise that they have shown to date with respect to the full effective implementation of their commitments and the settling of pending issues in order to bring about a political, comprehensive and inclusive solution in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999), adopted by consensus by the Security Council.

Mr. Manzi (Rwanda): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for briefing us on the Secretary-General's quarterly report (S/2013/444) on the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK). We also welcome to New York Mr. Ivan Mrkić and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

In June, at a debate on the same agenda item (see S/PV.6979), Rwanda welcomed the document signed between the two parties. I wish to acknowledge that it is encouraging to see the progress that Serbia and Kosovo are making. The high degree of commitment, flexibility, vision and creativity demonstrated by all parties, both in Pristina and Belgrade, for the steadfast implementation of the agreement should be commended. There is no doubt that the full implementation of the agreement on the ground is not far from realization.

We commend the positive spirit of both parties and call on them to continue to engage in a substantial discussion on matters of mutual interest, including the transformation of the existing structures in the north and a self-governing region that fits into Kosovo's jurisdiction, based on flexible application of the provisions of the Ahtisaari plan. We call on the international community to provide unconditional support and resources to sustain the positive momentum.

The greatest challenge ahead requiring attention is the scepticism in northern Kosovo. The agreement cannot be successfully implemented without cooperation. Implementation should therefore be carried out with the full participation of Kosovo Serbs, because sustainable reconciliation cannot be achieved in the presence of lingering mistrust. In that regard, the international community should continue to focus on the security situation in the north and prevent further tension, as security is a key factor in lasting peace for all.

Rwanda commends UNMIK's role in the monitoring, mediation and facilitation of activities that have contributed to the political process. The Mission should continue to adapt to the evolving situation in order to provide maximum support to the political process, focusing in particular on issues related to implementation of the agreement, and should play a role in ensuring the coordination of all efforts. Furthermore, UNMIK should actively help to promote reconciliation and trust-building in Kosovo's communities with a view to reaching a negotiated political solution. We therefore call on the people of Kosovo and other stakeholders to increase their trust-building efforts.

Rwanda commends the progress in Kosovo's institutions that facilitate economic and political stability, strengthen the rule of law and good governance and improve the protection of human rights and socioeconomic conditions. We hope that the prevailing atmosphere will lead to the permanent peace and stability that the people of region deserve.

Rwanda reiterates its support for the regional perspective in resolving differences, and therefore expresses full support for the continued guidance of the European Union in bringing the two parties closer. There is no doubt that the dialogue has marked progress in terms of concluding the agreement. The credibility of the entire dialogue process has been the cornerstone of the achievements we see today.

We believe that it is through dialogue, rather than threats or violence, that mutual issues can be solved. Rwanda urges all to refrain from any action that could undermine the achievements attained so far.

In conclusion, let me thank the European Union for its instrumental role in the negotiations leading to the tangible progress we witness today. I also express my appreciation to UNMIK, the Kosovo Force, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and all partner organizations that, in a difficult context, continue to play a role in establishing security and the rule of law and, above all, in bringing together the different communities in Kosovo and strive to seek a definitive settlement.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First, I thank you, Madam President, for the kind words of welcome and assure you of China's close cooperation.

I thank Mr. Zarif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his briefing. I have listened carefully to the statements made by His Excellency Mr. Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Mr. Hoxhaj.

China respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia and understands its legitimate concerns with regard to the question of Kosovo.

Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) forms the important legal basis for the settlement of the question of Kosovo. China believes that, in accordance with the

purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and under the framework of resolution 1244 (1999) and international law, all parties should seek a mutually acceptable settlement plan through dialogue and negotiation. It remains the best and only option for resolving the Kosovo question.

China appreciates Serbia's active efforts to seek a political settlement of the question of Kosovo. My country welcomes the substantive results achieved in the high-level political dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. We encourage both parties to continue the process of pragmatic, constructive dialogue aimed at achieving a lasting settlement of the question of Kosovo and maintaining peace and stability in the region of the Balkans and in all of Europe.

At present, the political and security situation in Kosovo is showing a positive trend. However, the situation in northern Kosovo is tense. All parties concerned should effectively protect the legitimate rights and interests of all ethnic communities in Kosovo and actively promote national reconciliation. They should take a cautious approach to resolving differences in the context of the dialogue in order to avoid any action that could complicate or exacerbate the situation.

China commends the work carried out by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the leadership of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif and supports the continued efforts of the Mission to implement the Council's mandate.

We hope that UNMIK, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force can strengthen coordination and cooperation in order to play a positive role in promoting the settlement of the question of Kosovo.

Mr. Ilichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the presence of Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, in today's meeting and share the ideas he has expressed. We have carefully listened to Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

We thank Mr. Zarif for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2013/444) and the assessment of the situation in the province.

The stabilization of the situation in Kosovo remains distant. In the context of the implementation of the agreement of 19 April between Serbia and Kosovo, the international community, and especially the United Nations, should not reduce the attention given to the Kosovo settlement process. What is needed is to genuinely leverage the capacities of UNMIK, taking into account that the agreement has not eliminated the province's core problems and that its implementation is limping along due to the failure of one side with regard to its obligations.

A milestone in the implementation of the agreement would be the holding of municipal elections in the province. We welcome the efforts of Belgrade aimed at holding elections. We must ensure the participation of the greatest possible number of voters living outside of Kosovo, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.

It is necessary that the electoral process remain status-neutral, even at the technical level. Both UNMIK and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), under resolution 1244 (1999), have the mandate and power to prepare and monitor elections. We note the importance of preventing — including through the OSCE — possible sabotage by the Kosovo Albanian authorities of the registration of Kosovo Serbs.

An nalysis of the situation attests to the fact that Kosovo Albanian authorities, with the collusion of the international presences, have essentially paralysed the return to the province of more than 200,000 Serbian refugees and IDPs, the restoration of their property rights and the observance of internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. Such a distressing situation demands radical improvement.

We are seriously concerned about signals from Pristina with respect to the downsizing in 2014 of the activities of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), including of the unit that deals with the investigation of cases identified by Council of Europe Special Rapporteur Dick Marty with respect to the illegal trafficking of human organs in Kosovo. That Mission was deployed with the consent of the Security Council, which authorized UNMIK to give it a number of powers that EULEX cannot unilaterally transfer. Because of the fact that resolution 1244 (1999) remains fully valid, those powers, in international legal terms, remain within the competence of UNMIK and cannot

be transferred to a third party, particularly to a self-proclaimed Pristina structure.

We also would like to remind the Council that it empowered UNMIK to play the most active possible role in assisting in the process of reaching a Kosovo settlement. The Mission must seek to resolve problems in such areas as the rule of law, the protection of the rights of minorities, working out inter-communal dialogues, gender issues and the protection of Orthodox holy sites. To that end, it needs the appropriate human and financial resources. We call upon the leadership of the Mission to focus its efforts on implementing the provisions of its mandate, even despite the impediments that are imposed on it by the Kosovo-Albanian authorities.

We are deeply concerned by the lack of assessment in the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/444) of the agreement reached by Tirana and Pristina in terms of military cooperation, which governs issues concerning the entry, withdrawal and temporary presence of the armed forces of Kosovo and Albania on each other's territories. The document de facto provides Albanian armed forces the right, on some allegedly legal basis, to be stationed in the territory of Kosovo, which fundamentally contradicts the provisions of resolution 1244 (1999). Our position is that under the Serb-Kosovo agreements, the security of Serbs in the province is guaranteed by the NATO-led Kosovo Force. Kosovo armed forces or other units of any kind should not be present in northern areas of the province

We anticipate that the dialogue mediated by the European Union between Belgrade and Pristina at a high political level will contribute to a long-term settlement of the issues of Kosovo. However, the final say in any case remains with the Security Council. Resolution 1244 (1999) remains fully in force and continues to be binding in international legal terms on any Kosovo settlement.

Mr. Menan (Togo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative, Mr. Farid Zarif, for the presentation of the quarterly report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2013/444).

Togo is pleased with the important work that Mr. Zarif is doing together with the entire Mission team to support the Kosovo authorities in the normalization of relations with Serbia and, more generally, to ensure the safety, stability and development of that country. I would also like to thank the representatives of Serbia and Kosovo for their statements.

On 19 April, Kosovo and Serbia finally reached an agreement to normalize relations, demonstrating that they are perfectly capable of finding peaceful solutions to their disputes. Togo wishes to reiterate its congratulations to both parties for agreeing to make major concessions in order to reach that agreement. Like any agreement, it is not necessarily ideal for all segments of the populations concerned. Nevertheless, it does have the merit of proposing a solution that makes it possible to emerge from the crisis, which we hope will enable the progressive resolution of the existing differences between the two parties so that they can respond to the challenges linked to the development and well-being their populations.

In that regard, Togo welcomes the adoption, on 22 May, of the implementation plan of the agreement of 19 April, which will, inter alia, make the necessary adjustments to the existing legal framework so that they can take into account the creation of the association or community of Serbian municipalities in Kosovo, aimed at carrying out the integration of the structures of justice and Serbian police within the new entity and initiating preparations for local elections. We also note the concrete steps taken by each party to make the implementation plan effective.

Moreover, we acknowledge the decision of the Serbian Government to close the justice and police structures still under its authority in northern Kosovo. We also acknowledge the adoption by Kosovo of a law granting amnesty to certain Kosovo Serbs and modifying the budget so as to take into account the financing of the association or community of Serbian municipalities in Kosovo. Likewise, we acknowledge other measures for a smooth implementation of the 19 April agreement, such as the decision of the Kosovo authorities to organize the upcoming local elections on 3 November, particularly in northern Kosovo, after which the association or community will be created; as well as the exchange, on 17 June, between the two parties of liaison officers responsible for facilitating communication and monitoring the implementation of the agreements.

With regard to the situation in northern Kosovo, which has always been a Security Council concern, we note that the report indicates a decline in acts of violence and the overall improvement in security as

political dialogue continues. We also welcome the reports that Serbs in northern Kosovo have finally made it known that they would not object to the implementation of the 19 April agreement, indicating that the parallel institutions of Serbia remain in place until the new elections. We call on both parties to pursue with determination the implementation of the 19 April agreement by adopting concrete measures conducive to a genuine reconciliation between the different communities living in Kosovo.

After the signing of an agreement, the reconciliation work undertaken by Kosovo and Serbia will take time. The reconciliation work will require drawing on memories to research the disappeared and educating the population concerned in order to root out resentment and promote peaceful coexistence. It is therefore crucial that the international community as a whole, especially international organizations in the field, continue supporting the efforts of Serbian and Kosovo authorities so that the momentum of reforms undertaken so far does not falter.

We welcome the efforts still being undertaken by the European Union, UNMIK, the NATO-led Kosovo Force, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which will play a particularly important role in the preparation of local elections in November, in which the local populations should take part without exclusion.

Mr. Tatham (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing today. I am also delighted to welcome to the Council His Excellency Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, Foreign Minister of Kosovo, and His Excellency Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Foreign Minister of Serbia.

Kosovo continues to make progress, both internally and on the international stage, and is now recognized by over half of the States Members of the United Nations. The United Kingdom welcomes the European Council's decision of 28 June to open negotiations for a stabilization and association agreement between Kosovo and the European Union. The United Kingdom fully supports the stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo, which is the first milestone on the path to eventual European Union (EU) membership. It also supports the decision to open accession negotiations with Serbia. Those decisions highlight the way in which improved cooperation and progress in the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina create opportunities and help yield progress in the EU accession process.

Negotiations on the stabilization and association agreement mark a new stage in Kosovo's relationship with the European Union, NATO and the United Nations. To that end, we have encouraged those countries that have not yet recognized Kosovo to do so. It is important that the stabilization and association agreement negotiations begin in the autumn and that they be finalized in good time. The United Kingdom hopes that Kosovo will work effectively with the European Commission to ensure that the areas for reform identified in the 2012 feasibility study are addressed. Kosovo must now make even greater strides in improving electoral reform, minority rights and the rule of law.

As we have said before, the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia is integral to both countries' European Union accession paths. The full implementation of the dialogue agreement will be crucial to unlocking progress for both Kosovo and Serbia. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Zarif has set out in detail some of the important steps that have been taken, and I welcome them. Those steps need to be consolidated and built upon, so I encourage continued efforts by both the Serbian and the Kosovo Governments in taking those difficult steps, and urge them to reach early agreements on energy and telecommunication.

Prime Minister Dačić and Prime Minister Thaçi have shown great courage and political leadership thus far. It is vital that the two Governments sustain progress, continue to find compromise and work together to overcome obstacles to implementation. Belgrade must also continue to communicate the benefits of that agreement effectively to the local communities in northern Kosovo, and Pristina must continue to make every effort to encourage the integration of Kosovo Serbs in the north by demonstrating that it supports the rights and cultures of all its minority citizens.

The continued assistance of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) and the implementation of dialogue agreements will be indispensable. We support the important role of EULEX, which will help integrate institutions in the north under Kosovo's jurisdiction. To that end, the United Kingdom urges the authorities in Pristina and Belgrade to cooperate fully with EULEX, particularly

by ensuring the freedom of movement for all EULEX personnel in the north.

I welcome Kosovo's commitment to providing free, fair and democratic municipal elections on 3 November. We urge all those who have influence to encourage wide participation in those elections. The Kosovo Government should work constructively with international organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which will play a crucial role in facilitating the elections.

The United Kingdom is also keen to see wider electoral reform in Kosovo before the end of the year. Kosovo-wide elections will be a significant step towards the integration of all minority communities across Kosovo. Another important part of the process is inter-ethnic reconciliation. In that respect, making progress on the issue of missing persons is crucial. The United Kingdom welcomes the formation of a joint Kosovo Government and civil society working group on dealing with the past. We hope UNMIK and other international organizations will continue to contribute to that process.

Mr. Maes (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I would like to join others in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and His Excellency Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/444) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

On 28 June, Serbia and Kosovo took a further step towards European integration with the decision by the Council of the European Union to open accession negotiations with Serbia and to authorize the start of negotiations on the conclusion of a stabilization and association agreement between the European Union and Kosovo. The decision of the Council of the European Union was the culmination of the efforts made by the Serbian and Kosovo Governments since the beginning of the dialogue facilitated by the European Union. The commitment of both Governments to implement the first agreement of principles for the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina, concluded 19 April in Brussels, led to that historic decision.

The exchange of liaison officers, the establishment of integrated border management and the gradual dismantling of parallel structures in northern Kosovo are just a few examples among many that attest to the progress achieved in the dialogue facilitated by the European Union. I welcome in that context the crucial role that European Union High Representative Catherine Ashton continues to play.

The implementation of the agreement of 19 April should continue to strengthen the standardization process. In that regard, we welcome the fact that, at their meeting in Brussels the day before yesterday, the two Prime Ministers, Mr. Ivica Dačić and Mr. Hashim Thaçi, reiterated their commitment to the success of the municipal elections of 3 November. It is essential that the necessary conditions be in place to ensure a good turnout for the elections, especially by Serbs in northern Kosovo, so that the provisions of the 19 April agreement on the northern municipalities can have their full impact. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has an important role to play, since, under the agreement, it is responsible for facilitating the elections in the north. For its part, the European Union is considering — with a view to accepting — the invitation by the President of Kosovo to deploy an election observation mission to assess the conduct of the electoral process throughout Kosovo. Moreover, the time remaining until the next session of the dialogue facilitated by the European Union, scheduled for 8 September in Brussels, will be utilized to continue the negotiations on telecommunication and energy in order to reach an agreement on those important issues in a timely manner.

The normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo must absolutely be accompanied by further reforms in Kosovo. We welcome, in that respect, the role that the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) continues to play with regard to the implementation of the normalization agreement between Belgrade and Pristina and in the fight against organized crime and corruption, the prosecution of war crimes and the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes, including those related to allegations of organ trafficking. It goes without saying that it is imperative that the Kosovo authorities continue to work closely with the European Union's Special Representative for Kosovo, Mr. Samuel Žbogar, and EULEX to continue building the rule of law in Kosovo. At the same time, it is clear that full normalization requires the irreversible dismantling of parallel structures throughout Kosovo. The rule of law that we all support must be based on a single administration, and good faith efforts are needed to get there.

The recognition of Kosovo by more than half of the States Members of the United Nations reflects the positive trend in Kosovo since the establishment of UNMIK, in 1999. Now, following the agreement of 19 April and given the normalization process that has been undertaken between Belgrade and Pristina, the time has come to take into account the new realities in the international community's approach to the issue, including within the Security Council. We will probably need to adapt, in the medium term, the international community's presence on the ground in Kosovo, as the European Union and NATO have already done.

As the European perspective for Serbia and Kosovo materializes in the coming years, it is clear that the need for United Nations involvement in Kosovo will decrease. We can only encourage the two countries and their leaders to continue to show the decisiveness necessary to bring about that common European future.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): Let me start by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/444) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We also welcome the participation in today's meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Ivan Mrkić, and thank him and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj for their statements.

Azerbaijan's position with regard to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and non-recognition of Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence remains unchanged. Resolution 1244 (1999) continues to be the binding international basis for a comprehensive settlement through a political process and negotations. Azerbaijan takes positive note of the developments that took place during the reporting period following the 19 April agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations. In that connection, we also note the further agreement reached on 22 May on an implementation plan for the 19 April agreement, and the subsequent meetings in Brussels to advance the work of implementation. We commend both sides for their efforts to safeguard their important achievements and encourage them to continue to remain committed to reaching agreement on the contentious issues through mutually acceptable solutions. That is indispensable to greater stability and well-being in the region.

We emphasize the extraordinary importance of UNMIK's presence and activities in Kosovo. It is noteworthy that the Mission continues to work closely with communities on the ground and to collaborate with all other mandated international presences in order to enhance the political dialogue's prospects for success. UNMIK should maintain and further develop its key role in ensuring the coordination of all international efforts within its status-neutral framework, as envisaged in resolution 1244 (1999).

It is encouraging that the overall security situation in Kosovo remained generally calm during the reporting period, though stability is yet to be achieved and incidents and tensions require serious attention and prompt reaction. The voluntary return of internally displaced persons to Kosovo again showed few signs of improvement during the reporting period. We commend the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to monitor the process and implement the necessary policies for facilitating returns. In that regard, the question of security should be given careful consideration.

The support of the international community for both sides remains essential, particularly in terms of building reconciliation and confidence. As the Secretary-General noted in his report, the unresolved legacies of the conflict, including unsolved cases of missing persons and the bringing to account of all those responsible for war crimes and other criminal acts, should remain key priorities.

In conclusion, I would like to commend UNMIK, under the leadership of Special Representative Zarif, for its contribution to consolidating peace and stability in Kosovo and the entire region.

Mr. Lamek (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing, as well as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Mr. Ivan Mrkić, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, Mr. Enver Hoxhaj, for their statements.

The Security Council is meeting for the second time since the historic agreement of 19 April between Serbia and Kosovo, reached under the auspices of the European Union. The agreement was quickly followed by regular meetings between the authorities of the two countries in order to ensure its implementation. The substantial progress that has been made shows their willingness to move towards normalized relations. We note with satisfaction the measures taken by Kosovo to grant substantial autonomy to the communities in

Kosovo with a Serbian majority; similarly, we welcome the Serbian authorities' closing of a number of police stations in northern Kosovo, thereby putting an end to the existence of independent parallel structures. We call on the parties to maintain their commitment to the Serb community in northern Kosovo in order to enable it to take ownership of the process of normalization. In that regard, the two parties should work together with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to ensure the success of the municipal elections scheduled for 3 November, by promoting the broadest possible participation of the Serbian community in Kosovo. It is crucial that the elections be transparent. Lastly, we call on the parties to arrive at an agreement in Brussels on 8 September on the issues of energy and telecommunication.

At the end of June, we reached a new milestone in the European rapprochement of these two countries. First, a decision was taken in principle to open EU accession negotiations with Serbia; the first intergovernmental conference will be held by January 2014 to enable Serbia to achieve its European destiny. Secondly, the European Council has approved the opening of negotiations aimed at signing a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo. That first contractual link between the young State and the European Union ushers in a new phase for the European partners and is a tangible symbol of a European future for Pristina. Such positive developments require that the international community act on them. We therefore call on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to adapt its presence to the situation on the ground in Kosovo and in collaboration with the Kosovo authorities. UNMIK continues to carry out important but residual functions. It is also essential that the Kosovo authorities cooperate actively with the Special Representative of the European Union, Mr. Žbogar, and the European Rule of Law Mission (EULEX), which is carrying out crucial work in implementing the agreements arrived at in the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. Lastly, all the parties must respect the freedom of movement of the soldiers and personnel deployed within the framework of the Kosovo Force and EULEX.

France remains committed to the realization of a sovereign, peaceful, democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo, living in peace with its neighbours. We believe that Serbia should become one of the pillars of stability in the Balkans, and today we are again a little closer to those two goals.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing this morning. We also thank Foreign Ministers Ivan Mrkić and Enver Hoxhaj for their statements.

We admire the courage and foresight of the leaders of Serbia and Kosovo and their commitment to working for peace in the region. The situation is complex, historical legacies are rife with mistrust and suspicion and expectations are mismatched. And yet the two sides choose to opt for dialogue, mediation and the implementation of the agreements they have concluded.

We agree that the problems that have plagued the region will not vanish overnight. That is why we still need diplomacy and continued investment in the efforts aimed at reconciliation. Progress is being made in the follow-up to the normalization agreement and implementation plan. Both sides have voiced complaints today, but they also demonstrate the commitment to forge ahead against difficult odds. There are strong indications that the current process could pave the way for the two countries to live side by side as peaceful neighbours. In that regard, we would especially like to express appreciation for the pivotal mediation role played by the European Union and High Representative Catherine Ashton. The decisions of the European Council in June to open accession negotiations with Serbia and stabilization and association agreement negotiations with Kosovo are welcome developments. Both Pakistan and the United Nations believe the European Union remains an indispensable catalyst for the process of normalizing relations between Serbia and Kosovo.

We see the role of the United Nations as an enabler, facilitator and impartial arbiter. The Kosovo Assembly's ratification of the normalization agreement and approval of the amnesty law will definitely help promote reconciliation. Amendments to the laws on local self-government, the rights of communities and the budget would help the implementation of the Belgrade-Pristina agreements.

In the interest of peace and the progress of future generations, all sides must reciprocate the spirit of accommodation. The Kosovo Serb leadership should participate in the management team to guide the implementation of the 19 April agreement and the creation of the future municipalities. Those efforts should be supplemented by Pristina's outreach and assurances to the local population. It is important that

the local Kosovo Serbs see themselves as stakeholders in the process. Outreach efforts by the leadership of Serbia to northern Kosovo Serbs are important. Leaders on both sides should continue to work together to build support for the implementation of the agreement among their communities and constituencies.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/444) notes that the overall security situation in Kosovo has remained generally calm and that there has been a decline in incidents affecting the minority communities. That is good news and may well be early evidence of a peace dividend for the region. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, under the leadership of Special Representative Zarif, continues to play a critical role in the stabilization of Kosovo. We particularly appreciate its mediation and facilitation efforts in northern Kosovo.

Recognition of Kosovo as a State is a key question. One hundred United Nations States Members have already done so. Pakistan recognized Kosovo late last year.

The most important step towards normalization and reconciliation will be formal inter-State communication between Serbia and Kosovo. That is a difficult step and we know the sensitivities involved, but it would ensure full rapprochement. We wish Prime Ministers Thaçi and Dačić success in the difficult road ahead. We are confident that their commitment and dedication, and the dedication of the people of the two countries, will ensure sustainable harmony and peace.

Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon (Republic of Korea): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for his briefing. I also welcome Foreign Minister Ivan Mrkić and Foreign Minister Enver Hoxhaj to the Council today.

We are pleased to note that Belgrade and Pristina continue to move forward in their implementation of the historic 19 April agreement on the normalization of their relations. We commend the constructive role and engagement of the European Union, in particular of Ms. Ashton, in the reconciliation process. The initial progress in implementing the agreement will be particularly meaningful as it builds confidence in the process and helps restore mutual trust among the stakeholders.

In that regard, we urge the Governments of both Serbia and Kosovo to use this opportunity to more actively push forward the implementation of the the agreement. The holding of municipal elections in northern Kosovo will be a crucial benchmark in the implementation process. We encourage Kosovo to step up its efforts for the transparent and smooth holding of the upcoming elections.

In order for the ongoing peace process to be sustainable and irreversible, the root causes of ethnic tensions and divides should be duly addressed. The education of youth on tolerance and mutual coexistence can play a crucial role in enhancing understanding and respect for ethnic diversity. Unless all ethnic groups and minorities are integrated into the peace process, true reconciliation between the two neighbours will remain elusive.

In that context, more vigorous efforts should be made to eliminate the scepticism and resistance of the ethnic Serbs in northern Kosovo. Their grievances and concerns, if not properly addressed, will remain severe impediments to achieving durable peace and reconciliation. We call on both Serbia and Kosovo to continue their utmost efforts so that the minority Serbs in northern Kosovo can recognize the common interest and share the future in the ongoing process of implementation of the 19 April agreement.

Pristina should ensure full safety and security for the ethnic Serb communities. Belgrade's efforts to assuage their fears and concerns will be critical as well.

We believe that there should be more efforts to address the legacies of the conflict, such as cases of missing persons and victims of sexual violence. Those remaining cases could disrupt hard-won progress and sow the seeds for future conflicts if justice is not served. We call on the Governments of both Belgrade and Pristina to redouble their efforts to heal the scars of war and protect human rights in the region.

Finally, we commend Special Representative Zarif and the staff of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo for their dedicated work.

Ms. Nassau (Australia): I thank Special Representative Zarif for his presentation and for his continuing efforts in supporting stability, security and human rights in Kosovo. I also welcome Foreign Ministers Mrkić and Hoxhaj and thank them for their remarks.

Australia supports an ongoing transition in Kosovo that provides for longer-term political stability with inclusiveness for all parties and that effectively

integrates Kosovo within the region. The Security Council's role is to support practical progress towards stability and security. That will eventually enable the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo to complete its mandate.

We welcome the progress made to date by the parties in fulfilling their obligations under the 19 April first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations. We also welcome the 28 June decision by the European Union to open accession negotiations with Serbia by January 2014 and to launch negotiations for a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo.

The priority for both parties now is the implementation of all 15 points of the April agreement, fully and within the agreed timelines. To that end, we welcome the establishment of liaison offices in Belgrade and Pristina on 17 July and the placement of a management team for the implementation of the Brussels agreement in northern Mitrovica. We welcome the Belgrade-Pristina working group's efforts to implement the agreement, particularly their focus on policing and on election preparations.

With regard to the negotiations in the complex areas of telecommunication and energy, we note that progress on practical areas such as these can translate into genuine confidence-building measures with a long lasting impact on security and stability.

A robust framework for guaranteeing human security, the rule of law, human rights and respect for cultural heritage is essential to the long-term prosperity of Kosovo and the welfare of its citizens. The local elections in the northern municipalities on 3 November, facilitated by the the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, will be a critical step towards political inclusion for Serbs residing in northern Kosovo within a sustainable and viable institutional framework. We welcome efforts by the Governments in Belgrade and Pristina to encourage all citizens living in northern Kosovo to take full advantage of that opportunity to build local democratic institutions that have the potential to be credible and legitimate. We note the steps that have been taken to date, including on the difficult issue of amnesty, in facilitating the transition of northern Kosovo's security and political structures into a coherent Kosovo-wide framework.

Australia also continues to encourage the safe and viable return of internally displaced persons. Australia is encouraged by the close cooperation among the Kosovo police, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), particularly in responding to security incidents in ethnically mixed areas in northern Kosovo. Ensuring security will continue to be vital for the success of the elections.

Australia welcomed the visit to Kosovo by United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Pillay on 19 and 20 June. Australia is encouraged that she noted continuing positive dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade. We were pleased that High Commissioner Pillay found that a good legal and institutional human rights framework was in place. Important next steps in building community confidence will be addressing the weaknesses of rule-of-law institutions in Kosovo, including ensuring the independence of the judiciary and addressing the lack of execution of judicial decisions.

Sustained efforts to improve inclusive education, and human rights education in particular, will also be vital for Kosovo's future generations. Australia welcome's Kosovo's commitment to protecting religious and cultural sights. In that regard, we note the ongoing transfer of responsibilities for the protection of religious and cultural heritage from KFOR to the newly established Kosovo police unit. It is essential that the work of that new police unit retains the confidence of Serbs throughout Kosovo. Australia condemns acts of vandalism, desecration and theft from all sights of cultural or religious significance. We commend the establishment of a cultural heritage council in Prizren on 2 July and hope that a similar council will soon open in Rahovec/Orahovac.

Australia continues to support ongoing dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. The sustained engagement of the international community will be crucial to ensuring that agreements are faithfully implemented. We continue to support measures to address the sensitivities of local communities, particularly in northern Kosovo, and stress the importance of encouraging the development of strong institutions to ensure a stable and peaceful Kosovo.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/444), which in many respects is hopeful. That should encourage us to exert even greater efforts in Kosovo. We are also grateful

for presentations given by Minister Ivan Mrkić and by Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

The Security Council will have to follow closely the implementation of the 19 April agreement. This is a critical moment in relations between the parties. The support of the international community and its commitment to Kosovo continue to be essential. We hope that the parties will continue to do everything within their reach to implement the agreement. The Belgrade agreement with the Kosovo Serbs continues to be important in that regard. Likewise, Pristina should complement those efforts and conduct activities to disseminate those agreements and provide assurances to the local population.

We agree with the Secretary-General that, in order to avoid tensions and achieve success, it is important for Kosovo Serbs to see themselves as co-participants in the process. Moreover, it appears to be positive that in the north of Kosovo the frequency of incidents related to the use of explosive devices has decreased significantly. We note that there has also been a decrease in the number incidents affecting minority communities across Kosovo, in comparison with the previous period. We also note that the application of the integrated management agreement on crossing points continues without major problems.

Despite that progress, the report also indicates that there are persistent tensions in northern Mitrovica with regard to the construction of houses for internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Kosovo and Albania. We are concerned that, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in April and May there were only 36 cases of IDPs returning to Kosovo, in comparison with 159 during the same period in 2012. According to UNHCR, a lack of sufficient funding to assign either housing and/or land continues to be one of the main obstacles to voluntary return.

As we mentioned in the latest debate on this topic (see S/PV.6979), we believe that he United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has a central role to play during this new phase of implementing the 19 April agreement. We welcome the fact that UNMIK is intensifying its efforts and its cooperation with all the relevant parties when it comes to major problems in the field. We support UNMIK's efforts to carry out mediation and facilitation functions in northern Kosovo and to serve as a channel of communication between municipal representatives and minority communities to ensure the effective provision of public and social services.

There is a broad range of activities in which UNMIK continues to use its capacity and resources to help reduce tensions and incidents. That is why it is important for UNMIK to continue enjoying all the necessary support to strengthen its presence in Kosovo, especially in the north.

Moving on to the work of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) special investigative task force on the inhumane treatment of migrants and organ trafficking, we note with interest the information included in the report on EULEX activities annexed to the Secretary-General's report. We follow its progress with attention.

We take very seriously the Secretary-General's comment on the importance of the international community's continued commitment to move towards reconciliation and to help heal wounds created by the conflict. We agree that the tasks of resolving the legacy of the conflict must remain a priority, including pending cases of missing persons and accountability for war crimes and other crimes.

To conclude, we affirm the primacy of resolution 1244 (1999) as a legal framework applicable to Kosovo, as well as the importance of full respect for international law. We thank the Special Representative for his continued efforts to promote reconciliation among Kosovo's communities.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Argentina.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/444) on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We also welcome the participation of Mr. Ivan Mrkić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and Mr. Enver Hoxhaj.

I wish, first of all, to highlight the fundamental role that the United Nations plays in Kosovo through UNMIK, which is to promote security, stability and respect for human rights and to cooperate with the Kosovo Force and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), while maintaining a neutral position vis-à-vis the status of the territory and operating under the auspices of the United Nations.

Argentina voted in favour of resolution 1244 (1999) when it was a member of the Security Council previously. We believe that it continues to be the international legal basis applicable in Kosovo for achieving a comprehensive solution through a cooperative political process and effective negotiations on the basis of good faith. Once again, we are pleased at the signing of the first agreement on principles governing the normalization of relations in the context of the process of the high-level dialogue under the auspices of the European Union. We trust that the agreement will contribute to the stabilization of the situation through compromise, confidence and dialogue. We hope that meetings will continue to be held between the parties in order to make progress in the implementation of the agreement and accelerate the political resolution of pending issues. In that framework, Serbia's efforts towards the normalization of relations deserve our special recognition.

We encourage the parties to continue along the path of progress in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999), and we also encourage them to implement the letter of the agreement by overcoming the wounds of the past in a peaceful manner in a relationship of trust.

While we are encouraged by the fact that the overall security situation in Kosovo was peaceful during the reporting period, we should not fail to note the security situation in northern Mitrovica, which calls for coordinated action so that the problems there can be appropriately resolved in order to prevent future tensions. The important work of UNMIK is particularly prominent when it comes to providing full support to political processes, giving special attention to issues related to the agreement of 19 April. Once again, we encourage the finding of specific practical solutions aimed at preventing tensions and ensuring that UNMIK continues to play its indispensable role in the field to prevent conflicts and conduct mediation and facilitation, as noted by the Secretary-General in his report.

We are very pleased with the progress made in the reconstruction and protection of cultural and religious heritage, which is one of UNMIK's priorities, aimed at ensuring the continuity of ongoing activities that contribute to genuine reconciliation between communities. Argentina believes that it is extremely important for there to be full respect for the human rights of displaced persons returning to their places of origin, so that they can have access to their substantive rights and not be the subject of discrimination. It is fundamental to continue working on ensuring the return and permanent reintegration of internally displaced persons, particularly by facilitating their access to housing, basic services and jobs, as well as through the issuance of documents on their civil status and the avoidance of incidents heightening insecurity.

UNMIK's technical assistance is of great importance, as is continuing to give priority to efforts aimed at erasing the traces of the legacy of conflict, which include ongoing cases of disappeared persons, as well as efforts to promote and protect all human rights. Impunity must not be allowed to be a response to major violations of human rights. We highlight UNMIK's work in its support of the rule of law, especially cooperation with all interested parties when it comes to the major problems in the field. As appropriately noted by the Secretary-General in his report, it is also key for the international presence in Kosovo to continue strengthening mutual cooperation with a common end of assisting in the establishment of appropriate conditions for the next stages of application of the 19 April agreement.

Finally, we wish to highlight the work done by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Farid Zarif, to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999).

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7027

Security Council

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Official communiqué of the 7027th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 29 August 2013, at 3.15 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"The President, with the consent of the Council, invited the representatives of Armenia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Romania, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, extended invitations under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to the representatives of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations and the African Union to the United Nations.

"The President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to the representative of the International Organization of La Francophonie to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

"In accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard, the President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation to the representative of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting.

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"In accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard, the President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation to the representative of the Observer State of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in this meeting.

"The members of the Council had an exchange of views."